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ABSTRACT

The articles in this issue consider key issues in the selection of populations for gifted education program services. Titles and authors of articles include: "The Identification Blues and How to Cure Them" (Ernesto Bernal); "Recognizing Giftedness in Your Child" (Linda Kreger Silverman); "Instructional Grouping, GATE and Honors Classes" (Bill Honig); "Selecting Talented and Precocious Youth for Special Programs and Providing Services at the Secondary Level" (John Feldhusen and Steven Hoover); "The Identification of Gifted Disadvantaged African-American Students" (Tommie Sue Anthony); "Curriculum Placemats for Non-Traditional Identification" (Sandra Kaplan); "The SOI Kindergarten Screen" (Mary Meeker); "Gifted and Learning Disabled" (Claudia Spelman); "Computers and Literature: Electrifying Reading and Writing" (Bill Burns); "Amorphous Silhouette: Another Attempt to Understand Giftedness" (Doug Sebring); "Screening Procedures for Gifted Students" (Mary Banbury and James Miller); "Strategies and Suggestions for the Handicapped Gifted Student in Science" (Greg Stefanich and Linda Rosulek). (JDD)

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Views on Identification

The Identification Blues and How to Cure Them

by Ernesto M. Bernal

"We have been trying to identify more minorities for the gifted program," she complains, "but they just don't qualify. I guess we'll have to adopt a quota system for them, huh?"

"We identify very carefully. But even with nomination and prescreening and individual IQ testing, some kids just don't succeed in our program. Could you recommend a better series of tests?"

"What about the checklist for identifying gifted Mexican-American children that you put out in 1974? Would you share that with us?"

"No," I respond. "Checklists, quotas, and screening tests seemed like a great idea in the 1970's – made us look more scientific and efficient. But while they can help you learn something about the children you are considering, you really shouldn't eliminate anyone with these."

"Well, then, don't keep trying to make us think," one quips. "Just tell us which test really works."

I share these comments because, while they are probably familiar to you, they also betray the superstition that many educators of the gifted have about test scores. Test scores are used as *determiners* to "identify" children who are presumably "gifted" (as if performance on a test is what giftedness is all about), to exclude other children who perforce must not be "gifted," to legitimize or "prove" (not evaluate) a program (as if test scores were all that we intend to show for our efforts), and, very importantly, to justify our administrative actions and justify our request for funding.

Rarely are test results used as *indicators* of what the children in our program are like, so that we may better serve them, or to help diagnose individual cares, or merely to assist us in the placement of children. In short, the reliance on tests that I have observed is primarily for the convenience of educators, not for the benefit of the children. What is more, test data are seen as being so "objective" and "hard" that virtually every other source of information pales by comparison in educational decision making. Our superstition about test scores is very pre-

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Recognizing Giftedness in Your Child

by Linda Kreger Silverman

Traditionally, giftedness has been equated with achievement, but from this perspective many truly gifted children are overlooked: young gifted children, gifted children with learning disabilities, underachievers, culturally diverse gifted children, gifted girls, the creatively gifted, and children who are talented in non-academic areas. Achievement in school or in adult life is the result of the nurturing of one's abilities; it tells as much about children's environment as it does about their talents. The concept of achievement is adult-centered; it places the emphasis on performance, mirroring the values of an industrial society.

In contrast, I define giftedness as advanced development in one or more areas. This perspective is internal, child-centered, and based upon differential rates of maturation. Advanced development is the opposite of delayed development. We recognize that some children develop more slowly than others, but we have difficulty acknowledging that there are some children who develop more rapidly than others. Both exceptionalities need early identification, assessment, and intervention in order to maximize these children's potential. The more the child's abilities vary from the norm, the greater the need for special provisions.

Advanced development is more complex than just a difference in rate of learning. Thinking of giftedness only in terms of learning rate presumes that everyone is on the same learning path, and that the gifted child just gets "there" faster. In fact, advanced development brings with it qualitative differences in learning style, perceptual organization, emotional responses, social relations, moral concerns, and goals of development. There are equally significant ramifications of delayed development. Developmental differences affect all aspects of a child's life; these differences must be understood if we are to meet the needs of atypical children.

In early childhood, giftedness can be observed as progression through certain developmental milestones at a more rapid rate than other children. On intelligence

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Gloria Burns

As I reflect on the last two years there are many things I have seen accomplished by CAG.

Perhaps the most rewarding was the passage into law of the O'Connell Bill, AB 732, which allowed all districts in the state to apply for GATE funding. This was a definite coup for CAG since it even preceded the passage of the AB 474 which reinstated the program. AB 474 was authored by a new advocate for gifted in the legislature, Assemblyman Ted Lempert. As the program has grown, CAG has risen to the task of providing more information for use by continuing as well as new districts. The Inquiry Committee process has developed and expanded over the last few years. Three inquiry committees have worked to develop documents which will be translated into handbooks. The first of these, which covers identification models, was included in the last *Communicator – Assessing and Identifying Students for Gifted and Talented Programs: Recommended Procedures.*

To be published in the future are handbooks on The Student at Risk and Program Models. The inquiry committee on Finding and Nurturing Underrepresented Populations has helped to develop preconferences and regional inservices during the past three years.

In an effort to continue to spread advocacy for gifted and talented children, much effort has been made to expand the *Communicator*, using themes and guest editors and broadening the base of contributors. The use of desktop publishing has given CAG's journal a new look. Its distribution and use are gaining more acclaim with each issue. The regional representatives have worked on a handbook of tasks, important contacts and procedures which will assist future representatives as they work within CAG's eleven regions to keep advocacy going strong throughout the state.

Looking to the future, it is hoped that the newly formed Business Seminar will grow, bringing a partnership for advocacy and support.

These two years have provided me, as President of CAG, with a truly rewarding experience. I would like to thank publicly the officers of CAG, the committee chairpersons, the regional representatives, the leaders of the inquiry committees, and all of you who have supported the interests of CAG. Thank you!

Erratum: In the May *Intercom* it was announced that NAGC offices are moving to Washington, DC. That is true, but the phone number listed was incorrect.

The correct address and phone are:

The National Association for Gifted Children
1155 15th Street NW #1002
Washington, DC 20005
202/785-4268

Mark your calendar...

1991 CAG Conference

Gifted Education: A Capital Investment

March 1-3, 1991

Sacramento Convention Center
and Hyatt Hotel

Call for presenters is on page 35

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Guest Editor's Column

Sheila Smith

In an article entitled "Searching in the Dark," in the *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Reva Jenkins-Friedman relates the following story:

A Good Samaritan happened on a man searching on his hands and knees under a street light. "I've lost my keys," explained the man. The Good Samaritan immediately joined the search. After nearly an hour of fruitless work, he asked, "Are you sure that you lost your keys under this light?" "Oh, no," replied the searcher, "my keys are somewhere in the dark alley around the corner. I am looking here because the light is so much better!"

The story has application to some of our current practices for screening, assessing, and identifying gifted and talented students for program services. Frequently, more time and services are spent on the easily identifiable than is necessary. Dr. Jenkins-Friedman characterizes these efforts as, "identifying and serving students in the light," – those who demonstrate easily quantified abilities, matching the predominant standardization samples' background.

Difficult screening, assessing, and program development tasks await those teachers, parents, professional experts, and school psychologists who locate students whose talents are not readily apparent.

Assessing and identifying students for gifted and talented program services has broad application to the field of education. Screening through formal and informal assessment and observation techniques has advantage for appropriate educational placement, use of materials, and strategies to meet the needs of the individual student. These techniques need to be a part of every teacher's repertoire and an integral component of teacher training programs of inservice training provided by school districts.

The articles in this issue, "Views on Identification," offer some light on issues which many consider to be key issues in the selection of populations for program services. In this issue, Mary Banbury and James Miller discuss some general procedures and screening scales for conducting a search for gifted students. They caution that in order to be effective, inservice training must be provided and a school-based identification committee should be established. Tommie Sue Anthony writes from an experiential framework and examines some of the barriers which prevent districts from finding African-American students for participation in programs. Ms. Anthony also discusses another kind of barrier, some of the negative perceptions held by underrepresented populations about gifted programs. The "Identification Blues," (Ernesto Bernal) challenges us to use tests for program placement and development rather than as determiners of who "doesn't belong." Doug Sebring utilizes the Betts / Neihart theoretical model as a means to discuss gifted behaviors, feelings, and needs as a resource to understand and serve gifted students. Sandra Kaplan emphasizes the ability for continuous assessment available to the classroom teacher. Linda Silverman focuses on some of the usual signs of giftedness evident in early childhood stages, as well those signs that are atypical characteristics. Ms. Silverman recommends testing children during early childhood. Ms. Silverman's views are in stark contrast to those expressed by John F. Feldhusen and Steven Hoover. Feldhusen and Hoover emphasize the need to reconceptualize our approach to identification of gifted youth.

Claudia Spelman directs our consideration to ways to find children who are gifted and learning disabled and who frequently use their giftedness to mask the disability. Mary Meeker writes that preventive assessment provides instructional programs which are the result of assessing individual differences.

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Whatever you can do,
or dream you can,
begin it.
Boldness has genius,
power and magic in it.

Goethe

Instructional Grouping, GATE and Honors Classes

A memorandum from Bill Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction, to County and District Superintendents of Schools and GATE Coordinators, dated May 11, 1990.

This memorandum follows up on the April 14, 1989, memorandum discussing instructional grouping practices and tracking in relation to the Gifted and Talented Education Program, honors, and Advanced Placement classes.

It has come to my attention that some schools and districts are eliminating advanced classes based on a belief that the California Department of Education is encouraging or requiring heterogeneous grouping of students at all times and for all instructional activities. This is not the case. It is true that we are urging schools to eliminate abusive tracking practices that place a student early in his or her school years into tracks from which the student cannot emerge. We wish to encourage schools to eliminate remedial tracks and a remedial curriculum and to replace this dead-end curriculum with a rich core curriculum in which diverse students can be successful. Within this core curriculum, we recognize that it is essentially a matter of local policy to design instructional grouping practices. We hope that schools and districts will implement flexible and inclusive grouping practices which enable as many students as possible to achieve at the highest levels.

Various recent Department publications and presentations such as *Caught in the Middle, Equity and Access in a Language Arts Program for All Students,* and documents related to the School Improvement Program have urged schools to consider more flexibility in instructional grouping practices and use of techniques such as cooperative learning in order to make a rich curriculum accessible to a diverse student population. The repetitive skill and drill curriculum often associated with remedial tracks has neither remediated students nor excited them about learning. Regrettably, some people have misunderstood this advice as holding back advanced learners in order to assist less proficient learners. This is not our intent. In fact, our goal is to dramatically increase the number of students who can successfully complete advanced course work. Rather than setting an upper limit on the attainments of advanced learners, we seek to raise the overall level of attainment, to increase the number of advanced and honors classes, and the number of students who can be successful in them.

There has also been some misunderstanding with regard to the Model Curriculum Standards and curriculum frameworks. One of the most important features of the new curriculum frameworks is the complexity of content which can offer challenging instructional experiences for varied learners. I urge teachers to explore ways of involving all students in these complex learning tasks. To be sure, there will continue to be students with a variety of special needs requiring targeted assistance. Just as low-achieving students need supportive intervention, so our most advanced students should receive careful monitoring to ensure that they are fully challenged for continuous learning. A core curriculum is not the same as a standard curriculum. The curriculum frameworks were developed to provide an open-ended structure within which to provide substantive instructional content for all students. However, the frameworks were never intended to prescribe a lock-step approach to teaching. Nothing in the frameworks should be construed to imply any change in policy regarding GATE programs, except insofar as we are urging schools and districts to include more students in advanced learning opportunities at all grade levels. Participation in advanced classes should be encouraged for many more students. In no case should a student be denied admission to a college-preparatory or advanced class because of a single standardized test score.

Throughout the state, schools and districts are looking at alternatives to tracking. These alternatives require careful planning. Simply eliminating tracking without such planning can do more harm than good. Some schools are focusing on eliminating the lowest (i.e., remedial) tracks, recognizing that less successful learners can benefit more from a meaningful curriculum than from repetitious drills on low-level skills. Other schools are attempting to establish the college preparatory curriculum as the core sequence for most of their students. Still others are involving many more students in gifted or advanced classes whether or not these students are formally identified as gifted.

I believe that many more students can be successful if we disavow remedial approaches with watered-down curriculum and provide, instead, a rich core curriculum with adequate motivational and tutorial support. I am urging all of the educational community to take another look at grouping and course enrollment practices and consider approaches that would enable many more students to succeed in the most challenging courses at all levels in our schools.

If you have any additional questions or concerns regarding this issue, please feel free to contact Barbara Brandes, Administrator, Office of Special Programs, at (916) 322-5016.

Selecting Talented and Precocious Youth for Special Programs and Providing Services at the Secondary Level

by John F. Feldhusen and Steven M. Hoover

We may have school programs, parent associations, state offices, and national organizations for the gifted, but it's surely time to reconceptualize our approach to the identification and education of "gifted youth." The term "gifted" with its extreme emphasis on biological determination and finality of classification is totally discrepant with current theory and research concerning human abilities and the development of human talent. Some youth exhibit advanced, nearly adult-like capacity to reason, they learn very rapidly, they have acquired a large storehouse of information and vocabulary, and they may be voracious readers. Their general level of intellectual functioning may place them from two to six years beyond their peers. Their advanced academic and intellectual ability may be partly a result of biological endowment (Bouchard, 1984), but in the main we conclude that they have had opportunities at home and in school to develop their abilities to the fullest extent through superior tutelage. With so much momentum for academic and intellectual development in progress, our task becomes one of finding ways to sustain it, continue the growth, and even enhance it if possible.

The problem then is not to find the gifted few, the endowed few, the chosen few. Rather it is to find those youth whose precocity exceeds the normal classroom range, whose talents show so much promise that special educational adaptations, services, and stimulation are required. To a great extent they surface easily at the secondary level and are highly visible in regular classes, as their talents manifest themselves in noteworthy performances or products. They will nominate themselves for honors classes, advanced placement courses, art and music shows, academic competitions, and special Saturday and summer programs. Self nomination works for a large portion of secondary selection activity (Shore and Tsiamis, 1986). Precocious youth and their parents are well aware of the students' superior ability or talent (Chapman and McAlpine, 1988; Nicholls and Miller, 1984).

Where then is the selection problem? It surely is not in the business of trying to administer tests and determine definitively who is really, truly one of the "gifted few." It lies instead in the problem of finding those who do not self select or surface so easily. It is a problem of finding youth from minority or poverty homes who have potential but are currently not being selected for programs (McKenzie, 1986). It is a problem of finding and counseling girls (Silverman, 1986) who fail to recognize, deny, or suppress their own talents or precocity. It is a problem of finding and rescuing the able youth who have lost their motivation, suspended their drive to achieve – the underachievers (Butler-Por, 1987; Mandel and Marcus, 1988; Rimm, 1986), and it is a problem of finding those youth whose physical and psychological handicaps mask their precocity (Whitmore and Maker, 1985). These are major segments of the precocious, talented, or able population for whom special efforts must be made to assure their selection for special programs and services to meet their academic and intellectual needs.

How Then Does The Selection Process Work?

We begin by invoking the general "talent pool" concept presented by Reis and Renzulli (1986). In a new book (Feldhusen, Hoover, and Sayler, in press), we elaborate on the "talent pool" concept and provide detailed directions for finding the youth who are advanced, talented, or precocious in middle and high school, using a variety of tests, rating scales, and nomination procedures. Our arsenal of search instruments includes five new rating scales developed especially for selection at the secondary level in mathematics, science, social studies, English, and foreign languages. The scales are called the Purdue Academic Rating Scales (PARS). They were developed through extensive work with hundreds of teachers in different areas of teaching. Reliability and validity studies with large samples of teachers indicate that the Scales are useful in selecting students who need and will profit from special program services.

For youth from minority and/or poverty homes where opportunities for verbal development might have been limited, individual testing with the Ravens Progressive Matrices (Ravens, 1947) or with the WISC-R (Ortiz and Gonzalez, 1989) may be appropriate. Taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade through one of the regional talent searches provides especially good opportunities to detect very high verbal or mathematical reasoning ability (VanTassel-Baska, 1984).

Karnes and Collins (1981) provided an inventory of tests potentially useful in selecting youth with high potential, but program leaders may wish to consult more recent publications such as Levy and Goldstein's Tests in *Education* (1984), Keyser and Sweetland's *Test Critiques* (1984), and *The Tenth Mental Measurement Yearbook* (Conoley and Kramer, 1989). The SOI Tests developed by Meeker and Meeker (1986) also show special value in identifying talent among disadvantaged youth. A wide variety of tests of ability, achievement, and aptitude is available. Coordinators of special programs, counselors, and school psychologists should pool their knowledge of tests and testing to capitalize on all instruments which may be useful in assessing talent among secondary students. This is especially critical in locating gifted students in special populations.

23684 Schoenborn St., Canoga Park, CA 91304

Beyond tests, teachers and parents can be taught to be effective contributors to the selection process. Nomination and rating scales are abundantly available to facilitate getting input from teachers and parents, but it is desirable to provide inservice training for teachers to alert them to the salient characteristics and needs of talented youth, and to orient them to the use of rating and nomination instruments.

Identification of talent in the arts and vocational areas can begin with nomination and rating scales such as the Art, Music, and Dramatics subscales of the Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (Renzulli et al., 1976). Clark, Zimmerman, and Zurmuehlen, (1987) have presented a more elaborate description of procedures for assessment of talent in the arts involving performance and product assessment. For the vocational areas the Purdue Vocational Talent Scales (Feldhusen, Hoover, and Sayler, in press) provide excellent means of assessing talent for trade, business, home economics, and agricultural occupations.

The data from the various strands of testing, rating, and other assessment should be examined by the program coordinator in cooperation with a talent pool evaluation committee to determine if special services beyond regular class and school offerings are called for to meet the needs of selected youth. The committee should review individual cases, and counselors should confer with students and parents to determine their views of students' needs. The calculation of an overall index with a matrix to determine if each youngster is gifted or not should be avoided or should at best be used as an initial rough estimate of talent. As Hoge (1988) has pointed out, it is certainly indefensible to be calling a large part of the school population "nongifted" when we remain so uncertain or variable in defining or conceptualizing giftedness (Richert, Alvino, and McDonnel, 1982; Sternberg, 1986).

Out of the review by the coordinator and the talent pool committee comes a list of students which details the special strengths, talents or potentials of each matched to suggested classes, services, counseling needs, etc. The coordinator and counselors can work with groups of identified youth to define their own educational and career goals and to develop a plan for personal growth drawing from a list of available services. Many of the services listed in the figure are available in larger middle schools and high schools. The options may be quite limited in small, rural school districts. Program coordinators can extend the list by working with colleagues to develop new programs and services.

Secondary Program Services

1. Counseling groups focusing on
   A. Goal Setting
   B. Career selection and planning
   C. Educational and career planning
2. Honors classes
3. Selected electives
4. Seminars
5. Foreign languages
6. Part-time college enrollment
7. Clubs and organizations
8. Advanced Placement courses
9. Community opportunities in
   A. Art
   B. Music
   C. Drama
10. Early enrollment in advanced math and science courses
11. Mentor and apprenticeship opportunities
12. Independent study
13. Debate
14. Correspondence study
15. Academic competitions
16. Saturday and summer programs
17. Study abroad or exchange opportunities
18. Classes at art institutes, historical museums, and other community agencies

Summary

Feldhusen, Asher, and Hoover (1984) discussed the problems of identification in school programs for the gifted. As identification is practiced in many schools there is an assumption that there are special human beings who can be reliably diagnosed as gifted; by implication then, the rest are nongifted. However, research to date shows no definitive diagnostic procedure, no agreed upon definition, and no explicit cutting levels on test scores to delineate a category of children to be called "gifted." All classification schemes for giftedness are arbitrary. We simply agree that the scores are high or very high. Our criteria should not rest on a specific test-defined level, it should be derived from a specification of need. We spell out procedures for such a conception of giftedness in *Identification and Education of Gifted Secondary Students* (Feldhusen Hoover, and Sayler, in press) and in *Excellence in Educating the Gifted* (Feldhusen, VanTassel-Baska, and Seeley, 1989).

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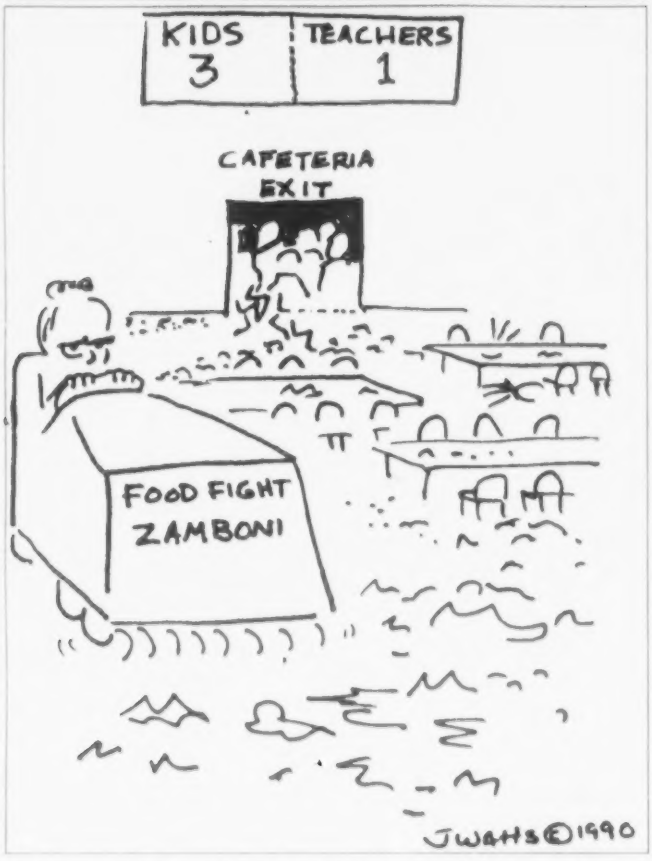
On the Light Side



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The Identification of Gifted Disadvantaged African-American Students

by Tommie Sue Anthony

One of the greatest challenges programs for the gifted face in the 1990's is increasing the participation of educationally and/or economically disadvantaged minority students. This is not a new challenge, but it is one that few school systems have chosen to accept. Consequently, many minority groups are drastically underrepresented in programs for the gifted and in many communities programs are labeled "elitist" or "discriminatory." Unfortunately, the accusations may appear to be true if the students served in the programs are predominantly middle and upper middle class whites. As America's population changes and the numbers of minority students increase, these accusations will also increase, and the survival of programs for the gifted may depend on identifying and providing services for gifted minority students.

Before school systems can increase the number of disadvantaged African-American students identified for and served in the program for the gifted, systems must acknowledge that there are barriers that hinder the process. In the South one of the greatest barriers is that many African-Americans perceive programs for the gifted as programs for whites only. Consequently, African-American parents do not nominate their children for gifted programs, and in fact, many do not want their children in the programs.

School systems also present enormous barriers. Some of these as outlined by Passow (1986) are:

- Attitudes and expectations of educators who often do not believe there is giftedness in culturally different populations.
- Over-reliance on intelligence tests which focus mainly on the absorption of facts and the systematic processing of those facts in predetermined ways as the prime criterion for identification.
- A rigid learning environment in which the diverse skills and interests and kinesthetic modes of expression which many culturally different children have carefully nurtured are frequently ignored or discouraged.
- Failure to provide the necessary general education, basic skills foundation, and learning-how-to-learn skills which are required for the further development of specialized talents.
- Failure to create a learning environment and a climate for achievement in which attention is given to both the affective and cognitive elements of talent development.
- Failure to select, assign, and provide appropriate in-service education to teachers, counselors, administrators, and other educators who must create conditions for learning and who, by serving as the gatekeepers for programs and services, are critical in talent development.
- Failure to help culturally different students enhance their self-esteem and recognize that a low self-concept and a built-in expectation of failure are often evident in minority children because of the systematic and long-term discrimination they and their families have experienced.
- Failure to provide appropriate guidance and other support services.

When these barriers exist, disadvantaged African-American students are not nominated for programs for the gifted. Therefore, the first challenge is to increase the number of nominees. This can be addressed in several ways. First, educators of the gifted must publicly call attention to the disproportionate number of white children nominated for the program. Second, school systems must provide extensive inservice to teachers, counselors, and administrators on the manifestations of gifted characteristics in African-American children.

One of the best sources of behavioral characteristics of minority/disadvantaged youth is Torrance's "Checklist of Creative Positives" (1977). The checklist includes the following areas of strength:

1. Ability to express feelings and emotions.
2. Ability to improvise with commonplace materials and objects.
3. Articulateness in role playing, sociodrama, and story telling.
4. Enjoyment of and ability in visual arts, such as drawing, painting, and sculpture.
5. Enjoyment of and ability in creative movement, dance, dramatics, and so forth.
6. Enjoyment of and ability in music, rhythm, and so forth.
7. Use of expressive speech.
8. Fluency and flexibility in figural media.
9. Enjoyment of and skills in group activities, problem solving, and so forth.
10. Responsiveness to the concrete.
11. Responsiveness to the kinesthetic.
12. Expressiveness of gestures, body language, etc., and ability to interpret body language.
13. Humor.
14. Richness of imagery in informal language.
15. Originality of ideas in problem solving.
16. Problem centeredness or persistence in problem solving.
17. Emotional responsiveness.
18. Quickness of warm-up.

Another excellent checklist has been developed by Gay (1978). Using concepts found in the literature regarding gifted students, Gay outlined manifestations of characteristics that may be found among gifted African-American students. (See figure on the next page.)

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As this information is provided in inservice sessions, it is helpful to ask the participants if they can name a gifted African-American student or adult who displays one or more of these characteristics. Then they should be asked, "Do you see these same behaviors in your students?" At the same time, educators of the gifted must search student records, question teachers about students, and solicit parent nominations.

An excellent way to generate parent nominations is to send them a letter explaining the program for the gifted and inviting them to nominate their children. Another way to generate parent nominations is to speak to organizations, including churches, within the community. These efforts should provide a list of nominees for the program, but without these special efforts, African-American students probably will not be nominated.

Once African-American students have been nominated for programs for the gifted, the second challenge arises. This challenge is to select tests or instruments that may be used in the screening process. Many programs for the gifted traditionally have relied heavily on intelligence or achievement test scores. This reliance eliminates many disadvantaged African-American students who will not perform well on the tests. Hilliard (1976) explains that this problem stems from how the tests are constructed. He believes that there are two major approaches to assessment. The first approach asks students, "Do you know what I know?" The second approach asks, "What is it that you know?" Therefore, to meet the second challenge school systems must look for additional sources of information about student abilities. Non-traditional methods of providing information about students and what they know should include student interviews, samples of student work, parent interviews, peer nominations and self-nominations. Other sources of information can be student products and system-developed checklists based on Torrance's Creative Positives or Gay's Comparative Characteristics of Giftedness. The system must give as much weight to these nontraditional sources as they do to test scores. In fact, the system must adopt the concept that *no one piece of information will place a child in the program, and no one piece of information will exclude a child from the program.*

School systems must also determine if there is a disparity between the scores of white students and those of African-Americans. It is imperative that screening or identification committees know about the disparity, know how great it is, and know why it exists. Once this information is known, the committee may view scores differently. Scores that may be considered superior for a

Concepts from the Literature	Manifestations of Gifted Characteristics in Gifted Black Children
1. Keen observation	Picks up more quickly on racist attitudes and practices; may feel alienated by school at an early age.
2. Interest and ability in perceiving relationships	Seeks structure and organization in required tasks; may be slow to motivate in some abstract activities.
3. Verbal proficiency, large vocabulary, facility of expression	Many black children have large vocabularies inappropriate for the school setting; thinking in Black English may hinder the facility of expression in standard English.
4. Breadth of information	Difficult to determine many areas of experiential knowledge for black children.
5. Questioning, curious, skeptical	Though some ask too many "wrong" questions, some may have been conditioned to suppress questioning behavior.
6. Critical, evaluative, possessing good judgment	Explores (in perception of relationships) better or wiser choices; reads behavioral implications.
7. Creative, inventive, original	Makes up games and activities; expresses original ideas in other ways.
8. Power of concentration, long attention span	May have extremely strong concentration due to persistent noise in environment; may also express displeasure at having to stop an activity.
9. Independence	Need for less supervision is especially pronounced in black gifted.
10. Diversity of interests and abilities.	Frequently has artistic, musical, creative writing, psychomotor, or leadership talent in addition to global intellectual ability; may neglect school work due to other interests.
11. Academic facility and strength	Good at basic school tasks; may not have expected achievement due to inferior schooling.

From J.E. Gay, "A Proposed Plan for Identifying Black Gifted Children," *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 22(3), pp 353-360, 1978.

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disadvantaged African-American student may not be as high as those of other gifted students. Yet, both sets of scores indicate potential. Many African-American children with lower scores can perform successfully in programs for the gifted if they are given the opportunity, and usually their test scores will rise dramatically within a year of being placed in the program.

One way to meet the challenge is to develop activities for preschool children and to make them available to the African-American community.

Once African-American students are identified for programs for the gifted, school systems must provide appropriate educational experiences. Educators must acknowledge that some of these students may have gaps in their educational knowledge or experience base, and some of them may lack some basic skills. Therefore, the students must be provided opportunities to fill the gaps. In many school systems this may mean providing additional program options such as resource rooms, mentorships, and seminars. Therefore, the third challenge becomes developing a program for the gifted that is not inherently discriminatory. Systems that provide only fast-paced content classes as their program for the gifted run the greatest risk of being discriminatory. This risk can be reduced if programs provide appropriate support for African-American students who have potential but who lack some skills.

School systems must also work to change the negative perceptions of African-Americans about programs for the gifted. One way to meet the challenge is to develop activities for preschool children and to make them available to the African-American community. These activities should develop thinking skills, be simple, and be something that parents can do with their children. Programs for the gifted can develop booklets of activities and can distribute them to day-care centers, community organizations, and churches.

Efforts like these can help to change the negative perceptions held by African-Americans about programs for the gifted.

Finally, the best way to identify all potentially gifted students is to follow Frasier's (1987) "best practices" in identification.

1. The focus should be on the diversity within gifted populations. The gifted are not a homogeneous group nor do they express their talents in the same way.
2. The goal should be inclusion rather than exclusion of students.
3. Data should be gathered from multiple sources; a single criterion of giftedness should be avoided.
4. Both objective and subjective data should be collected.
5. Professionals and nonprofessionals who represent various areas of expertise and who are knowledgeable about behavioral indicators of giftedness should be involved.
6. Identification for giftedness should occur as early as possible, should consist of a series of steps, and should be continuous.
7. Special attention should be given to the different ways in which children from different cultures manifest behavioral indicators of giftedness.
8. Decision-making should be delayed until all pertinent data on a student has been reviewed.
9. Data collected during the identification process should be used to help determine the curriculum.

By following Frasier's "best practices," insuring that disadvantaged African-American students are nominated, using other sources of information, providing extensive inservice to all staff members and developing community support, school systems can overcome the problem of underrepresentation of economically and educationally disadvantaged African-American students in programs for the gifted without eroding the quality of the program. However, change comes slowly, and school systems must face the reality that dramatic increases in the number of African-American students identified for the program will not happen over night. Also, change is painful. Personnel in the program for the gifted should expect to face hostility and skepticism as they implement the change. They must believe that change is possible, and they must be committed to developing an inclusive and equitable program.

In the coming years, programs for the gifted must include greater numbers of children from economically and educationally disadvantaged minority groups. These children are the ones most likely to break the cycle of poverty and powerlessness that now exists in many minority groups. Programs for the gifted must identify and provide services for these children because it is the right thing to do. Programs for the gifted must identify and provide services for these children if they hope to survive in the 1990's and beyond.

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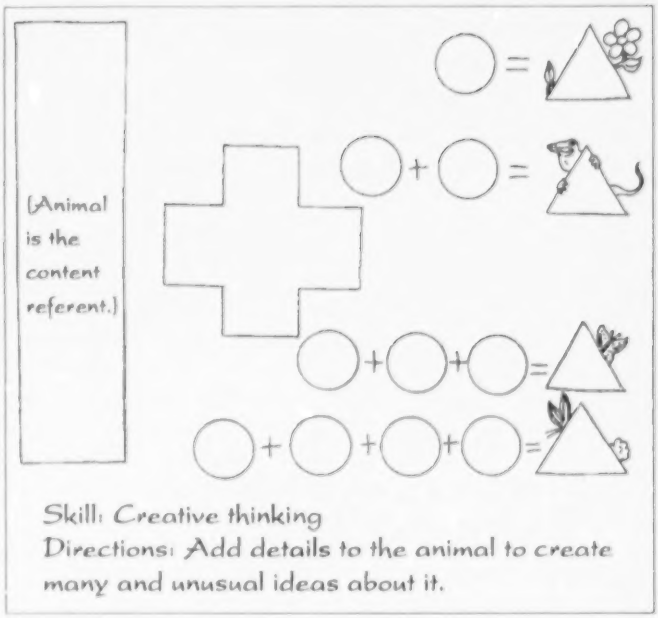
Curriculum Placemats for Non-Traditional Identification

by Sandra Kaplan

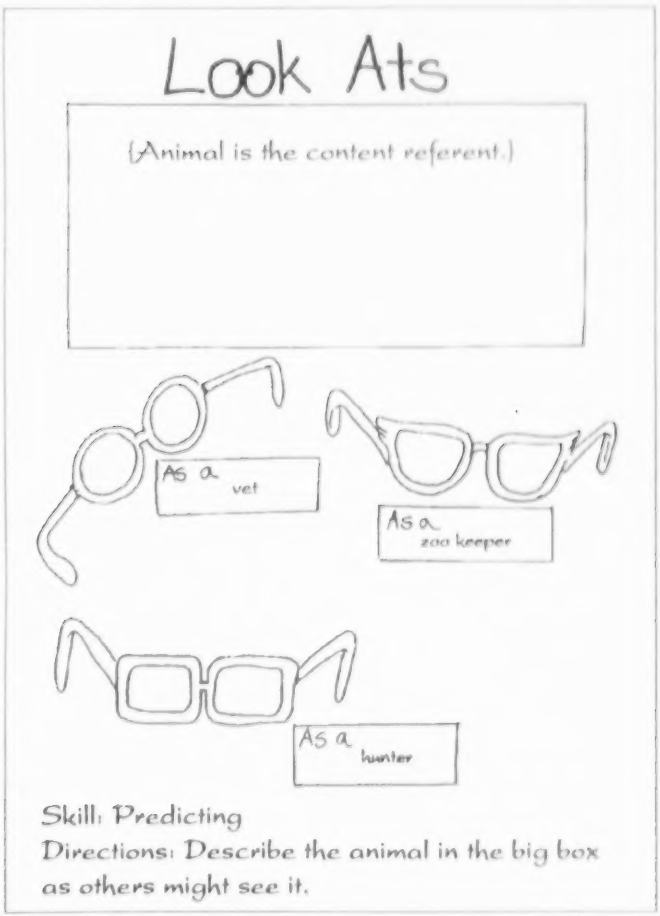
Non-traditional assessment tools and identification procedures are needed because of the recognized inadequacy of accepted standardized methods to define students from diverse populations as gifted and to reflect new information regarding the nature of intelligence.

Non-traditional identification practices shift the emphases from the use of norm-referenced measures, potentially biased assessment tools, and absolute indices, to the concepts of equity and relativity in the assessment process. Thus, the intent of non-traditional identification tools and procedures is to ensure the existence of evaluative opportunities that recognize individual differences and attempt to uncover those differences that signify both the potential for and performance of giftedness among all student populations.

Non-traditional measures usually share the characteristic of facilitating the demonstration wherein students can display their giftedness. With this as the objective, the Curriculum Placemats were designed with the support of a grant from the Texas Education Agency. This assessment tool is intended to be used by regular classroom, adjunct, or specially designated teachers in real or simulated teaching/learning situations. The goal is to use the non-traditional measures in a natural environmental setting in order to provide the students with a comfort level during testing that is similar to the typical environment in which they learn. The contextual reference of a school-like environment is intended to equalize the accessibility of all students to be recognized for their abilities.



Skill: Creative thinking
Directions: Add details to the animal to create many and unusual ideas about it.



Skill: Predicting
Directions: Describe the animal in the big box as others might see it.

Another equalizing factor of the non-traditional Curriculum Placemats is that the content of the assessment tool is open-ended. This reduces the often-described cultural bias of test content that is norm-based. This assessment tool provides the framework needed to elicit the exhibition of skills or processes characteristic of gifted individuals. The content in which these skills are embedded and subsequently practiced is teacher-dependent. The content is selected by teacher-administrators of the Curriculum Placemats and should be responsive to the particular needs and interests of the population to be assessed. It is advocated that traditional topics popular among various age groups be used. In this way, the content of the assessment items does not deter the student who is disadvantaged nor, more importantly, further the student's disadvantage by using content that is culturally or economically specific. In addition, the use of familiar content allows the skills to take a predominant role in the assessment procedure and consequently reinforces the display of skills without the interference of subject matter that potentially could distort the student's display of abilities.

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The SOI Kindergarten Screen

by Mary Meeker

"A sea of sweet faces, that's what I see each year I open my kindergarten door," Mrs. Adams said, "and how vastly different my students are. So excited and ready to learn. Where do I begin?" It is true. At no other time in a child's school life are individual differences more significant or more critical for their future success. They differ in:

- body – health, vision, hearing, endurance,
- emotional strength – independence, social interaction skills, heritage and cultural values,
- intellectual preparation for learning – pre-school experiences for concept development and vocabulary.

Traditionally schools have seen their responsibility as the transmission of knowledge, as if they were radio stations broadcasting information for their audience to receive and assimilate. But children in that audience are humans who enter school with different abilities, so, as every kindergarten teacher knows, all children do not receive information equally – the broadcast signals are not received equally. Some children are not "tuned in" to school. They are students at risk.

The first step in preventing educational failure is assessing individual differences.

The most effective remedy for this problem is preventive assessment – to know which students are not "tuned in" and why. If we know which students are potentially at risk, we can take steps to prepare them for learning (fix their tuners) before they experience wholesale learning failure and become labeled as "learning disabled." The key to this process is assessment before failure.

New York state has formalized the process into law. All children who enter New York schools must be assessed as to whether they are educationally at risk. Most of these children are those who are entering school for the first time, so the primary focus for assessment effort is the kindergarten population.

In 1985, the New York City Board of Education was mandated to address and program for these differences and selected SOI Systems to develop an effective assessment instrument. Upon entry into school students had to be identified as potentially gifted and/or those who might be at risk of developing learning problems if not identified and treated early. SOI Systems was asked to develop a kindergarten screening instrument which would meet the following requirements:

- range of age four through third grade
- complete administration in 45 minutes
- easily translatable into over 60 languages and dialects
- administered by aides and retired teachers
- identify potentially at risk children over the entire age range
- identify potentially gifted children over the entire age range

The last requirement – that the screen identify the potentially gifted as well as the potentially at risk – came from the coordinators of the New York City program for the gifted. Since every child was to be screened at entry, why not screen for both programs at the same time? This meant that the screen must range from at-risk kindergarten to gifted third graders. The SOI K-3 Screening Kit is the result.

What does the SOI Screen Assess?

- Seven intellectual abilities a child must have developed before entry into school if there is to be success in learning academic skills
- Articulation
- Expressive language
- Psycho-motor readiness for writing
- Motor integration

The seven SOI abilities offer as much differentiation as practically possible. Some are Figural-spatial, some are Symbolic-numerical and some are Semantic, but none require reading skills. Some abilities relate primarily to reading and others to arithmetic. Some require classification, others require relational thinking, and others require processing at a systems level.

The result of the assessment is an intellectual profile of the strengths and weaknesses of each student. Even those at risk may have some gifted abilities, so the whole profile is important.

The second step in Failure Prevention Education is the use of information about individual needs for curriculum adjustments.

How is information from the SOI Screen used to meet individual needs? The next step is aimed at redressing the weaknesses and enhancing the gifted abilities.

The teacher receives the information from the screen about the child's performance on the Report Form. This indicates the child's scores in stanines.

The reverse side of this Report Form relates the findings from the assessments to strategies and materials for remediation and/or enrichment instruction, both on the part of the teacher and on the part of the parents.

Potentially gifted children receive specific enrichment to maintain their strengths and also receive instruction that will address the development of any low or average areas that may suppress gifted achievement.

Potential learning problems that would place the child at risk are addressed specifically with at least three twenty-minute periods a week, according to needs.

Language-disadvantaged students, regardless of whether potentially gifted or potentially at risk, can be placed into a language arts program called LOCAN (Language Objectified for Concept Formation and Narration). It is a Figural-spatial Reading Series that promotes the understanding of English language structure while at the same time teaching a vocabulary of over 400 words. Computer games for the Macintosh are available with digitized speech instruction to augment the booklets.

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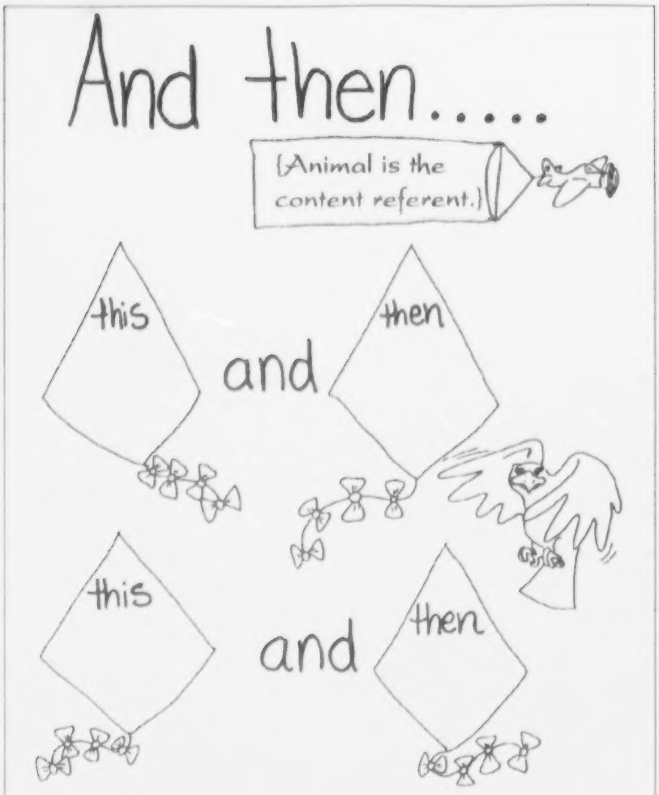

Skill: Planning
Directions: Describe the changes the animal in the big box could experience

subsequent performance of the skill by the students. As the teacher listens and observes the students, the teacher jots down the names of those who display the potential and/or ability to perform the task with reference to the specific nature of giftedness. Each characteristic of giftedness has been correlated to certain skills. For example, curiosity is defined as the skill of asking questions.

After working with the total set of Curricular Placemats, teachers use the "Jot Down" sheet to decide which students in the group have exhibited the characteristics of giftedness.

Non-traditional measures do not yield the specific data to determine definitively a student is a gifted individual. They do ensure that all students are extended the opportunity first to become acquainted with the skills denoting giftedness, and second to be stimulated to display the traits of giftedness that otherwise might be dormant because the basic or classroom curriculum has not provoked their appearance. Non-traditional identification methods are designed to give students a chance to practice and demonstrate giftedness.

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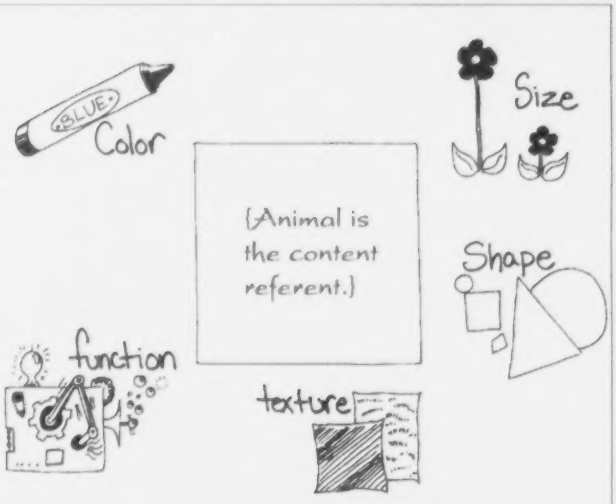
The administration of this non-traditional measure by teachers is another feature of this identification tool. Teachers are used as part of the evaluative process because they are most frequently the individuals interacting with the students. Thus, the regularity of this interaction provides students with the ease often required "to do their best." Most importantly, the teacher's involvement in the identification process serves as a staff-development experience that can be generalized to other students in the classroom. The skills used during the assessment procedure can be transferred and integrated consistently into the daily curricular experiences. In this way, teachers can use the concepts (or the actual Curriculum Placemats) as a means to teach or familiarize students with the behaviors of giftedness.

Figures 1 – 4 are examples of the Curriculum Placements. In an individual or small-group setting, students are shown the Curriculum Placemats that have had a picture of some content area (such as animals) inserted within the box. The box is the placeholder for the content the teacher will select to use with the skills represented by the various placemats. The "Users' Guide" and the clues on each placemat help the teacher describe the task and ask the questions that stimulate the type of thinking and



Skill: Questioning
Directions: Use the key words to ask as many questions as you can about the animal in the big box.

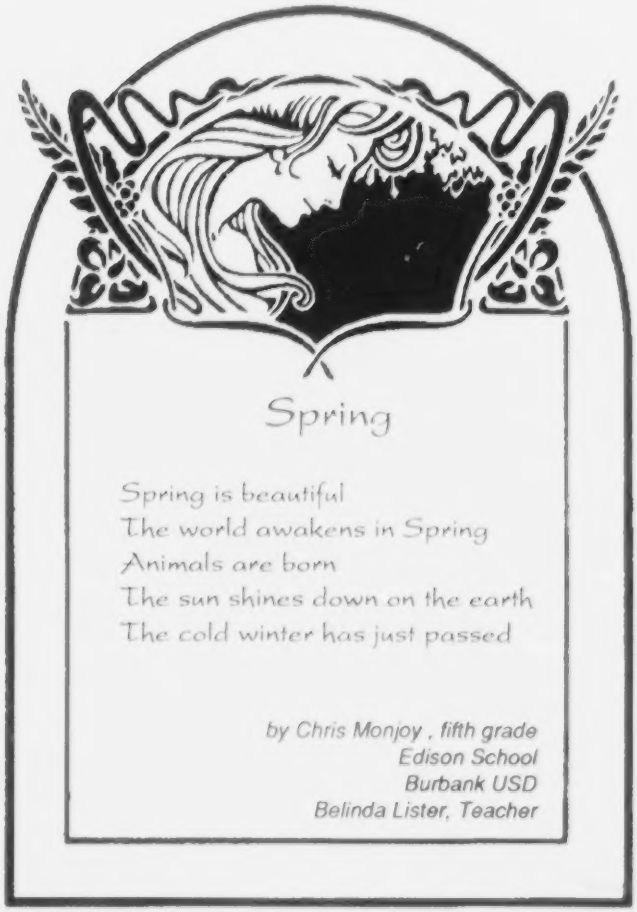
Wooden forms of the words and signs are recommended for motor inexperienced, motor insufficient, or delayed growth children. Schools using these blocks have been able to nurture, protect and consequently identify gifted children among Hispanics, Native Americans, blacks, and Asians who are not identified on traditional tests.

Other Scales

After the teacher becomes better acquainted with the students and finds that additional information relating to motivation or to social maturity would be helpful, the SOI Screen includes rating scales to be used to assist in identifying these other non-academic needs that so strongly affect school achievement.

Many districts in California point to their successful identification of at-risk gifted students. Through the use of SOI tests and instructional materials they identify gifted students who would not be identified on achievement or IQ tests. These districts welcome visitors: Huntington Beach Schools, Solana Beach School District, Alisal School District: Migrant Gifted (Dr. Sally Patton), Berryessa Schools: Hispanic and Asian (Dr. Roy Takeuchi), San Bernardino Juvenile Justice (Blanch Brandt), and San Diego City Schools: Bethune Magnet (Dr. Bob Morganstern).

Mary Meeker, Ed. D., Developer of SOI Systems, may be reached at Box D, Vida, OR 97488.



Spring

Spring is beautiful
The world awakens in Spring
Animals are born
The sun shines down on the earth
The cold winter has just passed

by Chris Monjoy , fifth grade
Edison School
Burbank USD
Belinda Lister, Teacher

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Just for Students... Why Not Write a Play this Summer?

Writers under the age of nineteen (as of July 1, 1990) are invited by the Foundation of the Dramatists Guild to submit their plays to its tenth annual Young Playwrights Festival. Selected playwrights will participate in casting and rehearsals of their plays, which will receive professional productions in New York City in 1991. Playwrights will also receive transportation, housing, royalty, and membership in The Dramatists Guild, Inc. All entrants will receive detailed evaluation of their plays.

Guidelines

- The choice of style, length, and subject is up to you.
- Scripts must be original. Collaborations are OK, but all writers must be under 19.
- Scripts must be typed and securely fastened.
- Scripts must be submitted by the author, not by a teacher or parent.
- Submit one copy of your play and keep the original at home – scripts will not be returned. Receipt of plays will be acknowledged.
- You may submit more than one play.
- Screenplays and musicals are not eligible, nor are adaptations of other authors' work.
- On the title page, type your name, date of birth, home address, and telephone number. You may be asked to submit proof of age.
- All plays must be submitted by October 1, 1990.
- Mail scripts to: Young Playwrights Festival
  The Foundation of the Dramatists Guild, Dept. P
  234 West 44th Street, Room 1005
  New York, New York 10036

Points to remember

- In plays, the story is told through speech and action rather than description. Avoid using a narrator if possible.
- Stage directions are useful, but cannot take the place of information conveyed through dialogue.
- Avoid too many characters – try to limit the number of actors to no more than ten.
- In theater, unlike film or TV, you cannot switch from one elaborate setting to another. What you write has to be acted out on a stage
- Look at a printed playscript to see how a play is typed.

Sound exciting?

If this sounds like an exciting project for you, sharpen your pencils and your wits, and use your summer wisely. If you have questions, contact the Foundation of the Dramtists Guild at (212) 575-7796.

Gifted and Learning Disabled

by Claudia Spelman

There exists in the school-age population a group of students who appear to be a contradiction in terms. These are the students who are gifted and learning disabled. This group of students may answer a great many different descriptions as some are more easily identifiable than others. The highly gifted student who masks a disability or creates compensations for the disabilities may pass through the corridors of the educational system and on into the collegiate world and the work place with little more than evidences of frustration. Other gifted students may be identified as having average abilities and teachers and parents alike may simply accept products and minimal school performance as being appropriate for this kind of youngster. Other gifted young people may fog their disabilities with aggressive or regressive behaviors that ultimately divert accurate diagnosis and appropriate services.

Generally, the gifted/learning disabled child demonstrates the same basic identifying dysfunctional characteristics as other learning disabled students. They may have difficulty with time and space concepts, they may demonstrate a need for multisensory stimulation for word learning, or have problems with quick changes of interest, flexibility, adaptability, and employing knowledge of cause and effect relationships. One difference between the learning disabled/gifted student and other learning disabled students seems to be in the degree and intensity of their defenses. It is as if they were bringing their intelligence to bear on not solving the problem. They divert their energy from learning to maintaining the defenses.

Denial, projection, and rationalization are favored defense mechanisms since each tends to reduce guilt and fear. Parents often are caught up in the same defenses and in some cases, such as those involving rationalization, are apt to pass them on to their children. It is sometimes necessary to seek psychological as well as educational interventions in order to assist the child in developing potential abilities.

Though arriving at an accurate diagnosis for the learning disabled/gifted student may be difficult, it is not impossible. There are no perfect tests but we do have instruments that can be used along with astute observations that will give educators and parents helpful information. In order to determine ability and achievement potential, diagnostic observation and teaching can be used with analyses of school ability tests to pinpoint areas of strength and relative weakness. It is important to note that composite scores are not as revealing as part or scaled scores of certain subtests. The teacher may note that the student's achievement test scores vary widely between different areas. There may be evidences of unusual ability to form concept relationships but a lag in the applications of those concepts. The frustrated teacher will complain that the student obviously "gets it" but there is little production on the part of the student. The school psychologist may report that the student has a high score on the similarities sub-test on the WISC-R or high scaled scores on other sub-tests. An informal measure of reading ability or an informal reading inventory can measure the differences between aural language ability and reading ability. Memory span ability can be observed as this element permeates so many academic processes. Informal measures of classification ability can be used to take a look at this aspect of concept formation. The School Study Team may designate members who would assist one another in a school setting as they make formal or informal observations of students. A portfolio of student products, teacher observations, and the school psychologist's assessment need to be analyzed in terms of student behaviors, evidences of relative strengths, and documentation of relative weaknesses.

In providing program, short-term plans need to be set. Learning should be mediated with little opportunity for the student to indulge in denial and rationalization. It is important in diagnostic teaching to present something different...redoing of old material is of no value. New ways of presenting materials, new materials, different groupings, and multisensory approaches should be tried. Using the diagnosed areas of strength to support the learning in areas of relative weakness is helpful. As always, with good teaching there should be defined processes for providing the student with a sense of acceptance and success within the school program. Pro-active intervention based on knowledge of the child's learning abilities will provide the youngster with access to a positive educational program.

Thomas Edison's father and his teachers thought that he was a dullard. His mother thought otherwise. She kept young Thomas at home and taught him herself. He learned well how to persevere and how to approach problems creatively. It is said that Edison tried 5000 ways to make a light bulb!

Claudia Spelman is a member of the CAG Inquiry Committee on Identification. She is the GATE Coordinator in Conejo Valley USD and can be reached at 1400 East Janss Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362; 805/497-9511.

It's not your aptitude
but your attitude
that determines your altitude.

Jesse Jackson

 23684 Schoenborn St., Canoga Park, CA 91304

TechNet

California Association for the Gifted

Computers and Literature: Electrifying Reading and Writing

by Bill Burns

"What? You want me to teach literature, writing, grammar, reading, critical thinking, cultural literacy, social values, AND the computer? Is that before or after reviewing for proficiency testing, CTBS, and CAPS!"

"Well, I thought you might. . . ."

"Isn't there someone I can just send my students to?"

"Uh, not really. The budget doesn't have funds to provide a qualified teacher to assist in the lab. We spent all our money on the machines."

"Haven't I volunteered to help with the candy sales? Aren't I on several school committees? Didn't I go to two inservices this quarter to keep up to date? Didn't I send you a card on your birthday?"

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It may seem unfair to ask an already burdened teacher to add a new responsibility to his or her teaching day. In the present world of Writing Projects, Literature Projects, Critical Thinking Symposiums, and "Across the Curriculum" approaches that seem to lean heavily on language arts for their success, isn't adding technology asking too much? What's in it for the classroom teacher who wants to be left alone so he can concentrate on making his literature-based curriculum work better and better?

The lesson plan that follows this discussion not only suggests how a computer can be used to enhance teaching literature, but the activities reveal some facets of literature that perhaps are easier to see with the computer manipulating the text. For example, changing line order in a poem or changing the width of text to look like a newspaper column can lead a student to see the original words in new ways. The computer frees the student from tedious or awkward tasks that rob him of time that might be better spent thinking about the text.

There is another reality of which teachers must be aware in trying to improve the literacy of their students. Those of us who stand before the students every day are from another generation, and I don't mean that in terms of age. As Gail Morse, a Christa McAuliffe Educator, has described us, we are a "paper-trained" generation. And our students are increasingly becoming part of a "light-trained" generation. The TV screen, the video-game, the film, and the computer screen are their sources of information and experience. Even their music is MTVized. We need to help them bridge the rough and unfamiliar waters that separate the printed page from their world of mostly visual stimuli. Writing with a word processor and reading text electronically seem like a logical connection.

The teacher who asks "What's in it for me? Is it worth it?" is really asking whether or not the computer can do anything better than what can be done without it. That's a legitimate question and one that can be answered with a loud YES!

Let's take a look at some of the things that a word processor or related graphics programs might do to enrich the reading of literature. I am going to ignore the obvious advantages of writing with a word processor for keyboard-proficient students. Rather, I'd like to look at some of the features of word processors that present special opportunities for studying literature.

The computer frees the student from tedious or awkward tasks that rob him of time that might be better spent thinking about the text.

- The "search and replace" feature can be used by students for a variety of approaches in studying literature. A student can change the point of view in which a story is written, finding all the *he's* and changing them to *I's*. The student, trying to get the computer to make the changes, will discover how points of view reside in pronouns and the differences that occur in verbs if the story is written in past tense or present tense. (He took—I took vs. he takes—I take.) The computer does the tedious changing and allows the student to concentrate on the thinking.
- Word processors that allow for "prompted writing directions" are an improvement over dittos. Have you noticed that on ditto sheets students tend to write as

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Electronic Text

A Lesson Plan Submitted by—
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Teacher Prep: Moderate
Lesson Time: Varied, depending on literature read
Environment: Computer lab
Computer Requirements: IBM compatibles, Apple/MacIntosh
Software: Any word processor, preferably one with "prompted writing" ability; formatted printing program such as *Award Maker* or *Certificate Maker*

Curricular Area: Language Arts/Social Sciences
Grade Level: Adaptable for grades 4-12
Objectives: Increase understanding of literature.
Write in a variety of modes.
Practice various features of a word processor.
Understand a thematic connection among different pieces of literature.

One of the recommendations of the Model Curriculum Standards for English/Language Arts is to teach literature based on thematic units. These units provide an organizational method to combine a variety of literature types and to provide a unifying focus.

For demonstration purposes, I have selected three works of literature for this lesson plan that fit the theme of "The Search for Justice and Dignity." Other themes, other works of literature could be substituted. The main objective of this lesson is to show how the computer can enliven, open up, and provide a different perspective on a piece of literature. The computer can help us get "into," "through," and "beyond" our reading, as the state framework suggests we do.

In most cases the suggested activities accompany and reinforce a teacher's usual methods to help students understand a particular piece of literature. Frequently, the computer activity will show students views of their reading that they might not have received without the computer. These literature activities can be supported by social science activities or the literature can be used to enrich the social science perspectives.

Suggested Readings

Ballad of the Landlord
a poem by Langston Hughes

This poem presents the frustration of a tenant trying to get repairs to his rundown house made by an unwilling landlord. After the class has read the poem, discussed the different voices in the poem, tried different ways to read the poem and discussed the poem's ideas and persons, try the suggested activities.

Suggested Activities

- Using a word processor, set the width of text to 35 spaces and write a news story about the landlord and tenant's conflict. Use the last three lines of the poem as the head-line for the story. This will give students a look at the different voices used in poetry and in factual writing.
- Using the "search and replace" feature of a word processor, have one group of students write a "secret" message from the prisoner in jail and turn it into a coded message. For example, turn all the vowels into symbols (@, $, %, *). Have a second group exchange messages and decipher the codes reversing the "search and replace" technique.
- Word processors like *FrEd Writer, Bank Street Writer,* and *Word Perfect* have the ability to write "prompted lessons" with instructions in boxes that don't print on a student's printout. Create a lesson that leads a student through a formal letter of protest to the landlord about the conditions of the property.

Social studies teachers could conduct a debate or a mock trial with the tenant and the landlord. Students could research the rights of tenants and landlords. Tom Snyder's program "Decisions, Decisions" could provide an excellent parallel to the poem and the difficult decisions made to provide for the poor.

Literature and the Computer

Song of the Deportees
a song by Woody Guthrie

An account of the death of a group of illegal immigrants in a plane crash. (Based on a real incident.)

- As an introduction to the song/poem, have students read the first four verses from a word processing file. Mix up the lines in the second and fourth stanzas and have students "cut and paste" the lines into a clearer order. Have students explain their order. You might leave the punctuation in the second stanza and omit it in the fourth to provide a variety of "clues" or difficulty. After discussing the students' choices, hand out the complete version. This is a good "into" exercise.
- Print a letterhead created on a program like *Print Shop* for a hotel, YMCA,town or a ranch that one of the workers might have stayed at.
- Choose one of the names from the chorus and write a letter home from that character about his or her experiences with "los americanos." Use a word processor and print it on the letterhead created above.

Social science activities could focus on the problems of illegal immigrants, their contributions to the U.S. economy, what drives them to the U.S.

The Portrait
a short story by Tomás Rivera *

An unscrupulous salesman promises to change a precious photograph into a portrait for parents of a dead son. He takes their money, the photograph is ruined, but the father gets his justice at the end.

- Introduce the story by having students read the opening paragraph of the story on a word processing file. Remove some of the descriptive words, verbs, nouns in prepositional phrases and have the students fill in the blanks. Have students share their versions and discuss their word choices. Then hand out the text of the story.
- Create a certificate from the salesman for the family to make the transaction seem important, formal and impressive. Use *Award Maker* or *Certificate Maker*. This gives students a chance to play with formal or ceremonial language. It's a good group activity.
- Using a program like *Print Shop*, have groups of students design a wanted poster written by the father or by the neighborhood looking for the salesman in San Antonio.
- As a concluding assignment, have students write an "Autobiographical Incident" about a time they bought something that turned out to be fake, less than expected or a disappointment. Use the word processor to support the whole writing process, especially revision.

Social science classes might study the different waves of immigrants to the U.S. and the history of legislature dealing with immigrants.

* From *Y No Se Lo Trago La Tierra / And the Earth Did Not Part*, published by Quinto Sol Publications, Inc., 1971. Also found in *United States in Literature*, Medallion Edition, Scott, Foresman and Company, 1982.

The above activities suggest how to use a computer, with a word processor and other programs, to examine and explore literature. These activities can be introductions *into* the work, used to move *through* the work, or help with projects that take the student *beyond* the work. Regardless of where they are used, the computer will give students a different perspective of the author's words, structure, and ideas. The search for justice and dignity may be made easier or more enlightening with the help of computers and electronic text.

Burns: *Continued from page 17*

much as the space allows and not more? If a student IS driven to write more than space allows it looks sloppy, since it is written in the margin or on the back. With prompts written on the screen, a student can write as much as he needs to write, not as much as there is space for. When the student is ready, he can print just the responses, free of the directions and suggestions. What's left are his thoughts about his reading.

- The "cut and paste" abilities of word processors can be used to examine the text of literature. For example, lines in a poem or paragraphs in a story can be rearranged for the student to examine and to rearrange into another order. The computer makes the changes easy (the student doesn't have to rewrite the text) and allows the student to try out different possibilities and deepen his understanding of the word choices and the order of the thoughts of the writer. This manipulation of text can lead to some very sophisticated discussions of the author's intentions and of verbal clues that lay in the writing.
- The unlimited and easy ability of a word processor to "insert" text can be used to type a passage of literature into a file and remove selected words or phrases. Then the student can fill in the blanks (unlimited in size) with his choice. This is a great introductory technique to a passage and forces the student to focus on word choice and structure. This "cloze" technique is not new to reading teachers but it is made easier by the word processor.
- Graphics programs like *Print Shop* and *Award Maker* allow students to experiment with different levels of language, such as a ceremonial use of words, or the language of posters, advertising or greeting cards. These programs bring a professional look to student efforts, with graphics used to illustrate literature-based projects.

As more and more teachers move beyond using a word processor only for writing, or using the various utility programs for printing classroom notices or awards or quizzes, we are going to discover all kinds of interesting applications to literature and the study of language. Not only does the computer aid our own creativity, but it can help us see the creativity of others in new ways.

None of the above uses of a computer are especially difficult to master. But they all bring a sharper focus, a different angle or a new perspective to the works of literature they are used with. And don't wish that you could give the responsibility of this teaching tool to a computer lab technician or another teacher. Be selfish. Use it for your own purposes, for your own teaching. The more you use it the more you will discover how writing with light will remove some of the darkness for your students. Electrify the text, and turn on the lightbulbs.

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Calendar

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Amorphous Silhouette: Another Attempt to Understand Giftedness

by Doug Sebring

"Never let school get in the way of your education." Although he never intended it as such, Mark Twain's sardonic advice may seem more pertinent to gifted students than any other school segment. Too frequently, the classroom fails to challenge or to provide for intellectually talented children. Yet, neither educators nor parents should restrict their concerns to the cognitive abilities alone. George Betts and Maureen Neihart (1988) offer a theoretical model that incorporates behaviors, feelings, and needs as a means to differentiate among these diverse children. Their schema provides a valuable resource both to understand and to serve gifted students.

Utilizing six profiles of gifted and talented students, Betts and Neihart suggest a model to facilitate the growth of these children rather than to produce an inclusive diagnostic tool. They note that young children may fluctuate from one profile to another, but gradually they will settle into one or two profiles.

Encompassing the largest percentage of gifted students is **Type I: The Successful**. The authors conjecture that Type I includes as many as 90% of the identified gifted students. These children function well within the system, performing appropriately and pleasing teachers and parents. Few problems emanate from this group because they enjoy adult approval. However, they may not get as much from school as they could because they become overly dependent on those in authority, refuse to exert themselves, and accept personal mediocrity since it is sufficient to satisfy most school expectations. While successful in school, they lose their creativity and autonomy. Although they grow into well-adjusted adults, the majority never reach levels of which they were capable.

The divergently gifted are called **Type II: The Challenging.** Such students "typically possess a high degree of creativity and may appear to be obstinate, tactless, and sarcastic." Conflict at home and school predominates because these students resist conformity. As young children they evidence humor and creativity which are appealing to their peers but vexacious to teachers. Poor self-concepts tend to coexist with creativity. If intervention does not occur by middle school, some move toward delinquency and are "at risk" as eventual dropouts.

Those students who attempt to hide their giftedness, **Type III: The Underground,** are mostly middle school females, though some boys are included. Girls go "underground" because of their need for social ties with non-gifted peers. Radical transformations can occur, which understandably create conflicts with teachers and parents. Attempting to force academic productivity has little probability of success and may only alienate them further. Patience and understanding offer the most likely means of intervention.

Partitioned into **Type IV: The Dropout** are those children whose needs the schools have failed to meet. These angry students vent their disdain "by acting depressed and withdrawing or by acting out and responding defensively." Ordinarily these are high school students, but Type IV's may include young students who attend school irregularly or who are consistently oblivious to the activities within their classrooms.

With the increased national attention to the atypical gifted student, it is quite appropriate that **The Double Labeled: Type V** exists. Included here are the physically or emotionally handicapped and learning disabled students. For sundry reasons, these students are seldom served in programs for the gifted. When one considers the elements confounding their identification, coupled with the impediments in their own performance in school, the difficulty in recognizing and serving such students becomes clear. Their weaknesses and deficiencies have received most attention in the past. Nurturing their strengths and potential should characterize the future.

Concluding this taxonomy is **Type VI: The Autonomous Learner**. Unfortunately, this profile fits too few gifted children. These are the children who have learned to employ the school system to generate meaningful learning opportunities for themselves. "They do not work for the system; they make the system work for them." Type VI's resemble Maslow's self-actualized person. They like themselves, are independent and self-directed, and feel personal power. Regardless of their age, they realize that they can introduce change into their lives without the direct involvement of others.

Through these six profiles of the gifted and talented, Betts and Neihart introduced a conceptual framework from which parents, educators and health professionals can effectively examine the social and emotional needs of these children. Certainly, an accurate understanding of the non-cognitive factors in a child's life presage one's ability to influence that child's learning. Secondly, these profiles can provide a useful tool to aid discussion of the attitudes, needs, and concerns of students. Gifted students should find little difficulty examining each profile and analyzing themselves.

The authors conclude by proposing this model for empirical research in numerous areas of the education of the gifted. Without doubt there are myriad questions which parents and classroom educators can begin to examine. Research in this field should become the focus of a broader population than university staff alone.

Reference

Betts, G.T., and Neihart, M. "Profiles of the Gifted and Talented," *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 32, pp 248-252, 1988.

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Profiles of the Gifted and Talented

	Feelings and Attitudes	Behaviors	Needs
Type I: Successful	• Boredom • Dependency • Positive self-concept • Anxious • Guilty about failure • Extrinsic motivation • Responsible for others • Diminished feelings of self and rights to their emotions • Self critical	• Perfectionist • High achiever • Seeks teacher approval and structure • Not risk-taking • Does well academically • Accepts and conforms • Dependent	• To see deficiencies • To be challenged • To take risks • Assertiveness skills • Autonomy • Help with boredom • Appropriate curriculum
Type II: Challenging	• Boredom • Frustration • Low self-esteem • Impatient • Defensive • Heightened sensitivity • Uncertain about social roles	• Corrects teacher • Questions rules, policies • Is honest, direct • Has mood swings • Demonstrates inconsistent work habits • Has poor self control • Is creative • Prefers highly active and questioning approach • Stands up for convictions • Is competitive	• To be connected with others • To learn tact, flexibility, self-awareness, self -control, acceptance • Support for creativity • Contractual systems
Type III: Underground	• Unsure • Pressured • Confused • Guilty • Insecure • Diminished feelings of self and rights to their emotions	• Denies talent • Drops out of G/T and advanced classes • Resists challenges • Wants to belong socially • Changes friends	• Freedom to make choices • To be aware of conflicts • Awareness of feelings • Support for activities • Involvement with gifted peers • College/career information • Self-acceptance
Type IV: Dropouts	• Resentment • Angry • Depressed • Explosive • Poor self-concept • Defensive • Burn-out	• Has intermittent attendance • Doesn't complete tasks • Pursues outside interests • "Spaced out" in class • Is self abusive • Isolates self • Is creative • Criticizes self and others • Does inconsistent work • Is disruptive, acts out • Seems average or below • Is defensive	• An individualized program • Intense support • Alternatives (separate, new opportunities) • Counseling (individual, group, and family) • Remedial help with skills
Type V: Double-Labeled	• Powerless • Frustrated • Low self-esteem • Unaware • Angry	• Demonstrates inconsistent work • Seems average or below • May be disruptive or act out	• Emphasis on strengths • Coping skills • G/T support group • Counseling • Skill development
Type VI: Autonomous	• Self confident • Self accepting • Enthusiastic • Accepted by others • Supported • Desire to know and learn • Accepts failure • Intrinsic motivation • Personal power • Accepts others	• Has appropriate social skills • Works independently • Develops own goals • Follows through • Follows strong areas of passion • Is creative • Stands up for convictions • Takes risks	• Advocacy • Feedback • Facilitation • Support for risks • Appropriate opportunities

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Adult and Peer Perceptions of Type	Identification	Home support	School Support
• Loved by teachers • Admired by peers • Loved and accepted by parents	• Grade point average • Achievement test • IQ tests • Teacher nomination	• Independence • Ownership • Freedom to make choices • Time for personal interests • Risk taking experiences	• Accelerated and enriched curriculum • Time for personal interests • Compacted learning experiences (pre-testing) • Opportunities to be with intellectual peers • Development of independent learning skills • In-depth studies • Mentorships • College and career counseling
• Find them irritating • Rebellious • Engaged in power struggle • Discipline problem • Peers see them as entertaining • Want to change them • Don't view as gifted	• Peer recommendations • Parent nominations • Interviews • Performance • Recommendation from a significant, non-related adult • Creativity testing • Teacher advocate	• Acceptance and understanding • Allow them to pursue interests • Advocate for them in school • Modeling appropriate behavior • Family projects	• Tolerance • Placement with appropriate teacher • Cognitive and social skill development • Direct and clear communication with child • Give permission for feelings • Studies in-depth • Mentorships • Build self-esteem • Behavioral contracting
• Viewed as leaders or unrecognized • Seen as average and successful • Perceived to be compliant • Seen as quiet/shy • Adults see them as unwilling to risk • Viewed as resistive	• Gifted peer nomination • Home nomination • Community nomination • Achievement testing • IQ tests • Performance • Teacher advocate	• Acceptance of underground • Provide college and career planning experiences • Time to be with same age peers • Provide gifted role models • Model life-long learning • Give freedom to make choices	• Recognize and properly place • Give permission to take time out from G/T classes • Provide same sex role models • Continue to give college and career information
• Adults are angry with them • Peers are judgmental • Seen as loners, dropouts, dopers, or air heads • Reject them and ridicule • Seen as dangerous and rebellious	• Review cumulative folder • Interview earlier teachers • Discrepancy between IQ and demonstrated achievement • Incongruities and inconsistencies in performance • Creativity testing • Gifted peer recommendation • Demonstrated performance in non-school areas	• Seek counseling for family	• Diagnostic testing • Group counseling for young students • Nontraditional study skills • In-depth studies • Mentorships • Alternative out-of-classroom learning experiences • GED
• Seen as "weird" • Seen as "dumb" • Viewed as helpless • Avoided by peers • Seen as average or below in ability • Perceived to require a great deal of imposed structure • Seen only for the disability	• Scatter of 11 points or more on WISC or WAIS • Recommendation of significant others • Recommendation from informed special ed teacher • Interview • Performance • Teacher advocate	• Recognize gifted abilities • Challenge them • Provide risk-taking opportunities • Advocate for child at school • Do family projects • Seek counseling for family	• Placement in gifted program • Provide needed resources • Provide alternative learning experiences • Begin investigations and explorations • Give time to be with peers • Give individual counseling
• Accepted by peers and adults • Admired for abilities • Seen as capable and responsible by parents • Successful • Psychologically healthy	• Grade point average • Demonstrated performance • Products • Achievement testing • Interviews • Teacher, peer, parent, or self nomination • IQ tests • Creativity testing	• Advocate for child at school and in community • Provide opportunities related to passions • Allow friends of all ages • Remove time and space restrictions • Do family projects • Include child in parent's passion	• Allow development of long-term integrated plan of study • Accelerated and enriched curriculum • Remove time and space restrictions • Compacted learning experiences with pretesting • In-depth studies • Mentorships • College and career counseling and opportunities • Dual enrollment or early admission • Waive traditional school policies and regulations

Screening Procedures for Gifted Students

by Mary Banbury and James Miller

Suppose that a group of educators with no training in the area of gifted education were told to nominate students in their class who would qualify for the gifted program. More than likely, the teachers would recommend students with good grades and personal attributes similar to their own. The tendency of most teachers is to favor students who attend to and complete assignments neatly and on time, who are cooperative, respectful, friendly, well behaved, well adjusted, and well dressed. It is improbable that they would choose students who correct them, resist routine, break the rules, act unconventionally, and appear disinterested or nonresponsive – traits which gifted students may possess. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the teachers will select "at risk" gifted learners, students from different cultural, racial, or economic backgrounds, students with dysfunctional families, physical impairments, or learning disabilities.

A major dilemma in the identification of gifted students is how is to effectively and efficiently screen the general population for potential candidates for gifted programs. An effective screening includes a high percentage of students who will meet the established criteria for giftedness. The process should not waste the potential of the individual nor overlook the development of talent which our society needs. An efficient screening minimizes the number of students who are nominated but who do not ultimately qualify for placement; it does not waste time, effort, and money, nor does it damage the self-concept of the student or the credibility of the program.

An efficient screening minimizes the number of students who are nominated but who do not ultimately qualify for placement; it does not waste time, effort, and money, nor does it damage the self-concept of the student or the credibility of the program.

It is imperative that schools form a committee to devise a plan that will allow them to correctly nominate enough students to include all those who are potentially gifted, yet not select too many who will be ineligible for the gifted classification. A plan for the screening of potentially gifted individuals should focus on the following areas:

1. developing an operational definition of giftedness that sets limits and provides guidelines,
2. establishing program purposes and goals that determine the direction of the screening process,
3. identifying the pertinent characteristics of potential giftedness that are subsumed by the definition and aligned with programmatic goals,
4. denoting sources of information for each indicator of giftedness,
5. assuring that "at risk" gifted learners will be included,
6. selecting multifactored screening activities and instruments, and
7. specifying how the screening data will be synthesized, weighed, and used.

A panel of experts who participated in a national study concerned with the identification of gifted individuals recommends the use of teacher, parent, peer, and self nominations during the screening process; they acknowledge the legitimacy of subjective procedures such as rating scales and checklists, and they endorse a multidimensional approach to gathering informal and formal data (Richert, 1985). The following is a brief description of screening measures that could be tailored to a school's definition of giftedness and could be used for all areas of ability.

Teacher Nominations

Teachers, by virtue of their close association and knowledge of students' academic performance, would seem to be the ideal conduit through which nominations for gifted programs could be received. However, several inherent problems exist with this nomination procedure:

1. self-fulfilling prophesy – teachers may not believe a student can perform, so they do not consider him or her for advanced programs, and
2. the child may exhibit overlying behavioral characteristics which mask giftedness, at least in the eyes of teachers.

The goal of nominating enough students to include all those who are gifted, but not many who will not be gifted should be accomplished through a process that is practical, comprehensive, and equitable. Research indicates that teacher accuracy and efficiency in the screening process can be significantly improved by inservice training sessions and the use of objective instruments such as checklists of characteristics of gifted students, rating scales, and inventories (Thomas, Miller, Stack, & Banbury, 1987). *National Report on Identification: Assessment and Recommendation for Comprehensive Identification of Gifted and Talented Youth* (Richert, Alvino, & McDonnel, 1982) provides information on sixty of these instruments according to:

- category (general intellectual, specific academic, creativity, leadership, and visual/performing arts),
- population (advantaged/disadvantaged),
- age (early childhood/grades 4-8/high school/adult), and
- identification stage (nomination, assessment, evaluation).

Screening Instruments

Three of the more commonly used screening instruments will be briefly discussed.

Scale for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of

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Superior Students (Renzulli & Hartman, 1971). This instrument is widely used to obtain teacher estimates of student performance and abilities in four areas: learning (8 items), motivation (9 items), creativity (10 items), and leadership (10 items). The checklist is scored in Likert style with answers ranging from (l) "Seldom or never observed this characteristic" to (4) "have observed this characteristic *almost all of the time*". Scores are not summed for a total, but are viewed as discrete items.

Gifted Student Screening Scale (GSSS) (Hall, 1985). This empirically documented instrument is short, stable, and easily administered. Twenty items which primarily measure two traits, "high achieving social" and "creative intellectual rebel," are rated on a Likert scale with point values ranging from (l) "seldom" exhibited to (5) exhibited "almost all the time". The research of Thomas, et al (1987), suggests that although this instrument is not racially biased, it does not appear to be a good discriminator for low-income populations. Educational systems may need to establish local norms in order to use this instrument.

Gifted Evaluation Scale (GES) (McCarney, 1987). The GES requires teachers to observe student behaviors. Forty-eight questions are rated on a Likert scale with point values ranging from (1) "Does not demonstrate the behavior or skill" to (5) "Demonstrates the skill at all times (consistently)." Specific subscales are: intellectual, creativity, specific academic aptitude, leadership ability, and performing and visual arts. Standard scores, quotients, percentiles and percentile rank scores are available. The GES is more definitive than the GSSS. For example, the GSSS item is: "Original in approach", while the GES item is: "Develops creative and original ideas which are unique (e.g., solves math problems using operations which are different from those provided through instruction, suggests a novel method of teaching an abstract concept to a groups of students, etc.)."

It is imperative that teachers who are asked to nominate students for gifted programs know the characteristics of gifted learners, definition and criteria for giftedness that is adopted by the school or school system, and the program goals. If existing instruments do not meet these needs, districts may develop their own nomination forms and provide inservice training to their teachers.

Parent Nominations

Parents are in a unique position to identify indicators of potential giftedness in their children, particularly at the preschool, kindergarten, and early primary levels. Interviews with parents have uncovered children who spoke complete sentences at two, began reading at three, composed music at four, and programmed the computer at five. In addition, parents are often aware of abilities in their children that are not measured by school or test performance. For example, they can provide information regarding a student's special or preferred interests, talents, and accomplishments. They can also assist in measuring their child's adaptive behavior, that is how effectively their child meets the standards of maturation, learning, personal independence, and social responsibilities expected for his or her age level and culture.

Peer Nominations

Peers in the fourth grade and above are particularly reliable sources of information regarding a potential gifted student's hobbies and interests, special artistic talents, leadership, organizational skills, and problem-solving abilities. Since peer interaction is usually less inhibited than the interaction between children and adults, peers may be aware of abilities and talents in their contemporaries that have escaped the notice of teachers and parents. One way to access this information is open-ended; simply ask peers to nominate students for the gifted program and to identify for each nominee those behaviors which they think are special. Another way is to use structured peer nomination forms based on predetermined characteristics. Items may be direct (Who in our class is the best at making up or playing word games, like raps?) or disguised (If you had to commission someone to draw a comic strip with Shakespearean characters, which member of our class would you select?) In either case, the point is to capitalize on the distinct perspectives that peers have of each other.

Self-Nominations

Self-nominations or self-reports are recommended procedures for older students, particularly those at the junior and senior high school level. They are especially useful in gathering data on personal values, feelings, attitudes, interests, aspirations, and long-range goals. Self-reports include such strategies as biographical data inventories, rating scales, questionnaires, and interviews. Self-nominations may indicate characteristics of giftedness which the student has observed in his or her own behavior, or they may delineate specific activities in which the student has participated or excelled.

Standardized Tests

A frequently used source of screening information for referral and evaluation is standardized test data. Most school systems administer some type of standardized test at the end of the academic year to "document" progress of individual students, schools, and entire systems. We use the term "document" with caution because the use of standardized test results to definitively document achievement is ill-advised in many cases. In addition, the validity of some tests is questionable because of the discrepancies between the norming population and the local group to be tested. Still in spite of the caveats presented in the professional literature, many districts cull the results of these tests for the top 2–5% of the students for referral as possible candidates for the gifted program. We do not encourage the use of test scores for referral purposes unless they are incorporated into a multifactored screening process. In the case of "at risk" gifted learners, other measures should be used in lieu of test scores.

Summary

The screening process for identification of gifted students should be a multifactored process generating both qualitative and quantitative data that will be reviewed and analyzed by the school-based committee. The deci-

sion to proceed to the formal evaluation phase should be predicated on multiple criteria that include nomination forms, inventories, behavioral checklists, and rating scales, as well as student records, test protocols, and student work samples. A multifactored approach assures that screening will be both efficient and effective.

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Sunset

The sun is setting,
sun so orange.
Reflected by the water,
the water – cool and glimmery.
The clouds close together,
purple clouds.
Ripples in the water, spread over the water.
The town's day noise,
hushed by the evening.
The sunset,
Purple with the clouds.
Blue with the pieces of day.
Black with the dark night.
Beautiful sunset.

Tania Tang, age 8

Sunset on the Thames

Sunset on the Thames
Big Ben striking six
One bank, the Houses of
Parliament
Along both banks,
Rumbling, rumbling
With Hustle and Bustle
of people, traffic
River flows
the Thames
Not affected
calm, still, smooth
Sunset on the Thames

Jason Bergsman, age 8
The Mirman School
Julia Corliss, Teacher

Bernal: *Continued from page 1*

cisely related to our attributing magical properties to these numbers, a power of accuracy and validity that they frankly do not possess, although they do help to keep us out of trouble and thus reinforce our dependence on them.

Given this unrealistic attribution of magical powers to tests and our almost slavish reliance on them for so many functions, and the inherent lack of validity of these tests for the purpose we have, it is no surprise that we occasionally get the testing blues. There are a number of interrelated points that need to be made. I hope that this article serves to get the reader to reconsider the identification issue.

First, no extant test or battery of tests measures giftedness per se. Giftedness as we understand it today transcends intelligence and academic achievement. It is a trait most easily attributable to adults whose regular contributions to a field cannot easily be ignored. Giftedness is determined outside a testing situation.

Second, there are few manifestly gifted children, and those children who really are gifted – who, like gifted adults, make independent, significant, creative contribution to a field – are easy to spot. Everybody knows they are special and who they are. They do not have to be tested. If their gifts are more or less in line with your program's emphasis, recruit them if the "fit" seems right, and then admit them.

Third, a program's "standards" are not really concerned with admissions; standards are correctly applied at the point of exit or certification or graduation or other climacteric signifying some sort of completion or transition. *Admissions* is the proper term to use, not *identification*, and admissions criteria should guide the selection process, preferably one that has been validated through experience and focused on both the purpose of the program and the processes that it emphasizes. (Thus a program for the academically gifted would use some different criteria for admissions than one for the performing arts.)

Fourth, the process of selecting the other children for your gifted program – the vast majority of your programs' participants – is not really identification but a dynamic two-way accommodation, a bet, a prediction that with a little work and mutual goodwill the children you are admitting and the professionals in your program will be able to develop productive and satisfying relationships. Testing can only help you with one side of their two-sided equation, and that is precisely why test scores should never determine the admissions decision, why we sometimes get the blues when "gifted" children do not work out, and why we will never be fully satisfied with test results, no matter how many tests or screening points we use.

Fifth, the key to your program's success, then, is not to be found in the identification of the gifted, as if you could count on finding a lot of "finished" individuals who already possess that special combination of traits in Renzulli's triad model that defines giftedness: high intelligence, high task commitment, and high creativity. One factor in the success of your program is to find young people who have the raw material to become gifted adults, the *able learners*. Identifying able learners is much easier (at least conceptually), since there are many ways, many techniques, many avenues for *including* children in this category or pool, from which you will draw or select those you will eventually admit. Tests, checklists, observations, and nominations can all be used validly, and children from all ethnic groups can qualify for inclusion as long as in this part of the process you do not insist upon identifying them as "gifted."

Sixth, the other factor for success lies in programming, designing, and actually delivering a program that takes care of two concerns. First, your program must build upon your students' assessed characteristics – "must play to what they've got." Here case studies and invitational tryouts can be used to inform the placement decision. Next your program needs to "give 'em what they need," the content, experiences, and support that will facilitate their becoming gifted adults. Effective programs for the gifted give children the chance to develop a strong knowledge or skills base, critical thinking and investigative and evaluative skills, a tolerance for ambiguity coupled with a dedication to excellence, the security to take intelligent risks and to create, the serenity to cope creatively with failures, and the ethical habit of seeking to do the right thing, not an obsession to do things right.

Programs such as this have no trouble working with and integrating children of diverse ethnic and even linguistic backgrounds, for such responsive programs build upon and see the need for multicultural education, for example, and cultivate the bilingualism that our best and brightest will need for the 21st century. Nor will motivation be a problem in such programs, for children who are stroked and groomed to be producers and performers (Tannenbaum, 1989), who not only learn but learn how to use what they have learned in courageous ways, inherently sense the need to move ahead.

Seventh and finally, placing able learners in responsive programs is the ideal way to validate both the selection procedures and the curriculum that define the essence of your program. You will then commit yourself to the long-term process of refinement, which is the proper environment for experiencing your own gifts and talents as a professional.

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Silverman: *Continued from page 1*

tests, the gifted perform mental operations at the level of children older than themselves. If they have talents in specific areas, they demonstrate mastery of skills beyond their agemates. If they are highly creative, they come up with unusual ideas at home and at school – ideas that reveal more intricate thought processes than their peers. Children can also be more advanced socially, emotionally, empathetically, morally, or spiritually.

Why Should We Try to Recognize Giftedness in Early Childhood?

When you recognize the characteristics of giftedness early in life, you are alerted to your child's need for enhanced stimulation and support. This information enables you to plan effectively for his or her optimal development. Equally important, it helps you realize that some of the problems you encounter in childrearing are due to the nature of the child rather than to your inadequacies as parents. Many parents fear they must be doing something wrong if their children have colic, don't sleep, or are highly active. These problems may be related to the children's highly organized, unusually responsive nervous systems, which make them extra-sensitive to pollutants, allergens, and tensions in their environment.

Many of the gifted children in our studies had colic in infancy and some degree of "hyperactive" behavior as toddlers. Sometimes these children were described as "unmanageable" by their parents. In most of these cases, the children also had a history of allergies – particularly food allergies. The most common allergies were to milk, wheat, sugar, corn, and glutens. If your child exhibits these symptoms, it would be wise to consult an allergist. Many difficult children have settled down considerably when certain foods were removed from their diets.

A rather typical pattern we've seen is the colicky baby, allergic to milk, who by the age of six months develops chronic ear infections with fluid in the middle ear. Children who are prone to ear infections need to be monitored regularly by a physician because these infections can occur without symptoms of illness. Children who have had more than nine ear infections in the first three years may eventually experience difficulties with listening, paying attention, phonics, spelling, rote memorization, and handwriting. These problems are difficult to diagnose in gifted children; since the children can do at least average work in school, they are perceived as "average" rather than gifted children with learning problems.

How Can We Detect Giftedness?

It is possible to recognize the signs of atypical development very early in life. Just as we now have methods of assessing delayed development in infancy, and even in the womb through new ultrasound techniques, I believe that one day we will be aware of the signs of advanced development in utero and in infancy. For now, the best predictor we have of giftedness in the newborn is giftedness in other family members.

At the Gifted Child Development Center in Denver, we have found siblings to be very close in IQ, despite differences in temperament and behavior. Brothers and sisters are usually within 5 to 10 IQ points of each other when they are measured at the same age on the same instrument. Discrepancies greater than 10 points are usually found to be related to hidden learning disabilities or chronic ear infections (which can depress IQ scores). We have also found parents' IQ's to closely resemble those of their children.

So if you were identified as gifted in childhood, if you skipped grades in school, if you had high SAT scores, if you were the valedictorian of your class, or if you had the characteristics of giftedness described below, there is a good chance that your children will be gifted. If one of your children has been identified as gifted, the chances are that *all* of your children are gifted. The discovery of giftedness in your children can have a profound impact on your own self-perception. The question, "What do we do with our gifted child?" becomes transformed into, "How do we understand giftedness in our family?"

What are the Signs of Giftedness in Young Children?

The earliest signs of giftedness that we have found *in some but not all gifted children* are:

- unusual alertness in infancy
- less need for sleep in infancy
- high activity level
- smiling or recognizing caregivers early
- advanced progression through the developmental milestones (described in infant development books)
- long attention span
- intense reactions to noise, pain, or frustration

In toddlers and preschoolers, additional signs can be noted:

- early and extensive language development
- extraordinary feats of memory
- fascination with books
- curiosity – also complex, probing questions
- keen powers of observation
- ability to generalize concepts
- vivid imagination (e.g., imaginary companions)
- early development of a sense of humor
- interest in numbers
- recognition of letters before age 2
- ability to count to ten by age 3
- ability to put together a 20-piece puzzle by age 3
- interest in time by age 3 (e.g., clocks, calendars)
- ability to sight-read an easy reader by age 4

One of the first symptoms which parents notice is their children's unusual alertness. This may begin to appear shortly after birth or it may gradually become more apparent. These children watch and listen intently, absorbing everything that is happening around them. They focus their eyes on objects for a longer period of time than other infants. This longer attention span remains characteristic, as does their keen power of observation. Parents of older gifted children often mention the inten-

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sity of their children's concentration.

As early as one month, advanced infants may follow moving objects with their eyes, smile, or make certain sounds other than crying. At two months, they may search for sounds with their eyes, begin to lift their head and chest, move vigorously, anticipate feedings upon seeing a nipple, and begin cooing and chuckling. Some infants evidence extremely precocious behavior. Several gifted children have been known to smile on cue at two-days old. One of the children we studied held his head up and pulled his chest up on his arms almost from birth. He waved "hello" at two months.

The clearest sign of accelerated development is in the area of language. Gifted children tend to speak earlier, use more complex sentence structure, develop a larger vocabulary, show an early interest in books and written words, and express themselves better than other children. In our first study at the Center, we found one child who said his first word, "hi," at 4 months of age. Five others spoke before their tenth month. One mother said that her daughter wanted to be read to constantly from the time she "sat up." Another described her child as sitting for two or three hours listening to books at the age of 18 months.

In our study, excellent memory was the most prevalent sign of giftedness reported.

We have also seen several cases of silent gifted children. In these children, language development is atypical. They are unusually quiet after the babbling stage, but manage to communicate all of their needs nonverbally. They may have older siblings or mother so tuned in to them that they have no need to talk to get what they want. They appear to understand everything and will follow lengthy sets of directions, indicating high receptive language ability. The moment of truth arrives when they decide to speak and come out with full sentences – often complex ones – as their first utterance. One parent reported that her child's first "word" was, "Charlie, would you please pass the salt?" Some gifted children did not begin to speak until the age of four (one such was Einstein), but these late speakers most often begin oral communication with fully formed sentences.

Gifted children usually have extraordinary memories. In our study, excellent memory was the most prevalent sign of giftedness reported. Advanced toddlers may be able to repeat songs or television commercials well before two years of age. These children can frequently "read" a story which has been read to them several times because they remember the words on each page. I saw an 18-month-old do this with a 60-page beginning reader. She was able to recognize several written words at 11 months.

Avid interest in reading prior to school age is one of the signs of giftedness. Almost half of the children in our study learned to read before they were five, and one-fourth before their fourth birthday. Many of these children reportedly "taught themselves to read." Thirty percent of the group wrote their first word by the time they were four years old. Five children were reported to have written their first word at two-and-a-half.

Unbounded curiosity is still another sign of giftedness. Parents often remark about the quality of children's questions, describing them as "very complex" and "probing." A one-year-old made the discovery that everything had a name and dragged her mother all over the house for hours, pointing to every object and saying, "Whatsat?" Some children pull things apart to find out how they operate. Others ask endless questions. Still others have difficulty going to sleep at night for fear that they will "miss something" while they sleep.

Developmentally advanced children learn things very rapidly and are often able to generalize their learning to new situations. They are amazing problem-solvers. They show evidences of abstract thinking at a very young age.

Creativity and giftedness appear strongly correlated in early childhood. Precocious children have highly active imaginations and are likely to invent imaginary companions. This is a sign of creativity and should not be a cause of alarm to parents. When an eleven-year-old with an IQ of 187 was asked if he had ever had imaginary companions, he replied, "I still do. I have nine of them." Many gifted children have imaginary playmates in childhood, whether they have "real" friends or not. Another clear sign of giftedness is exceptional aptitude for mathematical reasoning. We had cases on record of four- and five-year-olds solving square-root problems on calculators, adding four-digit numbers mentally, writing simple computer programs, using calculations in their everyday lives, or even inventing abstract algebraic formulations, such as:

$$(n \times n) - 1 = (n - 1) \times (n + 1).$$

In a study of young gifted children conducted in Seattle, the parent of a five-year-old boy was asked if her child recognized and named two-digit numbers. The mother responded, "Yes, he only starts losing track when numbers get into the tens of thousands." (Robinson, Roedell, & Jackson, 1979, p 149). Since most preschool children are still learning how to count, these feats speak for themselves.

Spatial relations tend to be advanced in gifted children, as evidenced by their early ability in puzzles and mazes. One mother wrote on her questionnaire that the only way her three-year-old could get sufficiently challenged was to take all of his puzzles and dump them in the middle of the floor at the same time. Another child memorized the shapes of complicated puzzle pieces and then put them together upside down. Robinson, Roedell, & Jackson (1979) describe one child who could do a 48-piece puzzle at the age of two-and-a-half, and another child who at the age of three enjoyed drawing detailed, accurate maps of his surroundings, and could trace paths through pencil mazes and copy geometric block designs as quickly and precisely as the average eight-year-old.

An excellent sense of humor characterizes gifted children. Gifted children learn earlier than most that humor is based on incongruity, the unexpected, or the absurd.

They also develop an early interest in and facility with puns. One two-year-old was playing under the bed where his mother was trying to take a nap. He called up to her, "Mother, are you resting?" When she replied, "Yes, I'm trying to," he retorted, "Does that mean that I'm under a rest?"

Young children who exhibit many of these signs should be followed closely, with careful records, to assist later identification. Baby books are a good first step, but they may be insufficient to capture the full extent of the gifted child's unusual development. Supplement baby books with diaries containing descriptive examples of behavior, tape recordings of language development, dated photographs of early art work and writing attempts, or video-tapes. Also, save doctor's records.

What are the Signs of Giftedness in Older Children?

The list of characteristics in the figure to the right has been continuously refined over a ten-year period. The descriptors have been validated through various studies at the Gifted Child Development Center and the University of Denver. They are representative of the majority of children whom we have tested (over 1200); they are descriptive of children with various types of talents; they apply equally well to mildly, moderately, and highly gifted children; they are applicable to a wide age range; they are appropriate for children of different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds; and they are easily observable at home.

If your child fits three-fourths of these characteristics, there is a great likelihood that he or she will test in at least the mildly gifted range (above 120 IQ) on an individual intelligence test. A child who fits the characteristics but does not test in the gifted range should be assessed for hidden learning disabilities which might have depressed the score.

These 25 characteristics provide a comprehensive picture of giftedness throughout childhood. Children who exhibit most of these characteristics should be assessed by a competent examiner who has experience in testing gifted children. The perfectionism of the gifted child needs to be handled delicately through humor and gentle coaxing, otherwise the young child may refuse to show the examiner what he or she really knows.

When Should a Child be Tested?

I consider the ideal age for testing gifted children to be between 4 and 6 years. Gifted four-year-olds may be mentally 6 years old. They respond as well to testing as first graders and the results are usually accurate. As gifted children get older, two factors can depress their IQ scores. First, the tests are not constructed with items of sufficient difficulty to capture the full range of their abilities. So the younger the child, the better the chances that his or her knowledge will not outstrip the limits of the test. Second, gifted girls tend to become perfectionistic around 8 years old and often refuse to answer any items they are not absolutely sure they will get right. By testing girls early, we can find out their true capabilities before they go into hiding (which girls have a tendency to do).

Please indicate which of these characteristics describe your child:

____ good problem-solving abilities
____ rapid learning ability
____ extensive vocabulary
____ excellent memory
____ long attention span
____ unusual curiosity
____ keen powers of observation
____ intense interest in books
____ excellent sense of humor
____ unusual insightfulness
____ enjoys playing with older children
____ judgment seems mature for age
____ perfectionistic
____ feelings hurt easily
____ sensitive to others' feelings
____ intense reactions to frustration
____ questions authority
____ concern with morality and justice
____ high level of creativity
____ vivid imagination
____ high degree of energy
____ wide range of interests
____ perseverance in areas of interest
____ interested in puzzles and mazes
____ interested in numbers and mathematics

Older children who exhibit these characteristics should also be assessed; however, their scores will probably not be as high as they would have been during preschool. Children who had chronic ear infections or are highly creative may be "late bloomers," doing progressively better in school and on tests as they get older. Second-born children often hide their abilities, so if your first child is identified as gifted, bring your second child for testing as a matter of course.

Recognizing giftedness is as important as recognizing handicaps. It enables you to be a more effective parent. Armed with test results, you can gain a more appropriate education for your child. This information provides a solid foundation upon which you can nurture your child's special abilities and help develop his or her full potential.

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Strategies and Suggestions for the Handicapped Gifted Student in Science

by Greg Stefanich and Linda Rosulek

This article provides a framework for more effectively addressing the needs of handicapped gifted students in the science classroom. The unique talents and abilities of this population have often been lost because of low expectations by parents and educators, a lack of responsiveness by educators toward full participation in laboratory experiences, and a lack of support by adults in helping these students feel important and appreciated in school settings. As teachers of the gifted, it is important to provide the support and awareness to subject area specialists who may not have the training, experience, or interest in serving these special students. We must be particularly aware that much of special education preparation is focused on responding to deficits. As a result, special education teachers are often ill-prepared to provide the necessary assistance for the academic needs of handicapped gifted students.

Perhaps the greatest overall consideration is providing school structures that are supportive to handicapped gifted students. Such structures should include nurturing of these special people on a personal, social, emotional, and academic level. A major stumbling block in providing these structures lies within a guiding principle of many public schools. The public schools were first created within the framework of egalitarianism: equal opportunities and treatment for all, regardless of individual needs. The attitude of egalitarianism is still prevalent in the schools today and, unfortunately, contributes to the lack of sufficient support for the handicapped gifted student, whose needs are above and beyond those of the typical student.

Handicapped gifted students often make the teaching act more complex. In addition to accommodating the physical differences, the teacher finds that he or she must adjust the substance of instruction in order to meet the needs of these students. This adaption of the curriculum is often compounded because of medical care which requires additional adjustment.

General Considerations

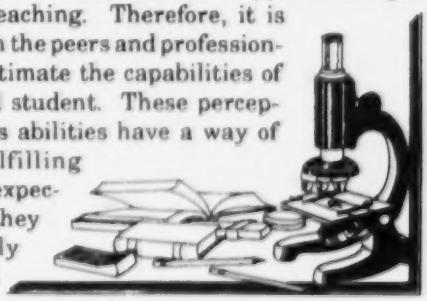
There are many straightforward approaches which are known to be helpful with most handicapped gifted students. Because the incidence of this population is relatively low, each student will require unique accommodation by the educator who serves him or her. It is important that the awareness and participation involve all school officials, including the principal, counselor, teachers, special resource personnel, parents, and school staff. There are a number of suggestions for addressing specific concerns which have relevance to the handicapped gifted.

An obvious suggestion is to obtain and read all relevant academic and health background information available on the student. Specific suggestions regarding the handicapping condition should be reviewed. Spend time acquiring knowledge on the physical, developmental stages, and psychological nature of the handicap, and how it affects the student's potential for learning and possible masking of giftedness.

Learn about the symptoms of special health problems and appropriate responses. Be sure to locate addresses and services of agencies and individuals which can be made available to assist in ensuring that these students are provided with equal opportunities for meeting their educational and personal needs. Because of the handicapping condition, it will be necessary to determine what special equipment is needed by the student for the academic area. In order to provide the necessary program, it is important that a discussion take place with the student about the limitations due to his or her handicap and about particular needs in the science class. This will help both the student and teacher to be aware of barriers, both physical and psychological, that inhibit the fullest possible functioning of the disabled student.

It is also necessary for the teacher to be open to the possibility and to be able to recognize the potential for giftedness among the handicapped. Once the relevant material is read, a needs assessment regarding the strengths, weaknesses, and interests of the student should be made. After such determination, a program that focuses on the exploration of the student's strengths and interests should be developed. It is important to be cognizant that the demands and outcomes for these students will be different from those of typical gifted learners. Consideration must also be made as to how to modify or adapt curriculum materials and teaching strategies for the disabled gifted student that provide challenges and enrichment, within the limitations of the student.

Another suggestion that may be helpful is to establish a team of fellow teachers (including gifted specialists, resource teachers, and aides) to share information and ideas about the special students. Not only should other professionals be included in the educational process for the handicapped gifted, but also peers. Allow for nonhandicapped students to help these special students, but discretely monitor their joint activities for possible redirection. The social benefits from this type of arrangement can be far-reaching. Therefore, it is important that both the peers and professionals do not underestimate the capabilities of the disabled gifted student. These perceptions of a student's abilities have a way of becoming self-fulfilling prophesies. If the expectations are low, they may detrimentally affect the student



and the teacher's ability to create new options for him or her.

Finally, it is the teacher's job to become an advocate for the handicapped gifted student by educating administrators and other educators and seeking required special equipment and support that will ensure the needed educational opportunities. Many times, without teacher advocacy on their behalf, these students will lose opportunities to reach their potential (Alexander & Muia, 1982; Bybee, 1979; Clark, 1983; Whitmore, 1981).

Specific Considerations

Each handicapping condition has its own unique needs and resources available. Three types of handicaps will be discussed in terms of specific considerations.

The **visually impaired** gifted students, according to Maker (1977), appear to reach their potential and accomplish the same levels as the sighted, but at a later date than those not visually impaired. She also found that they were weaker in the area of meaningful verbal memory than the nonhandicapped student. Based on interviews with gifted visually handicapped persons, Maker discovered that their desires were to experience a less protective environment and be given more opportunities to explore, using their other functioning senses.

Those who teach the visually impaired need to become familiar with methods and services from The American Printing House for the Blind, PO Box 6085, Louisville, KY 40206. Instructional aids, such as materials produced in Science Activities for Visually Impaired/Science Experiments for Learners with Physical Handicaps (SAVI/SELPH), Center for Multisensory Learning, Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, should be investigated. Another consideration when teaching these students is to provide opportunities for students to participate in small cooperative work groups, pairing the limited-vision child with supportive sighted partners. Provide oral directions and, if necessary, braille materials; allow recording devices during class. Another support would be directions and lab report forms printed in large print.

Maker (1977) noted that the **hearing-impaired** gifted experienced a slower rate of development and had greater difficulty dealing with abstractions than the nonimpaired student. In order to better serve this population, teachers need to be aware of the materials and services from the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, 3417 Volta Place, NW, Washington, DC 20507. It is imperative that the child be in good visual contact with the instructional materials and the instructor. The instructor should articulate clearly and use appropriate gestures and body language. If necessary, obtain a person who is competent in sign language to aid the student in class. Because these students have a more difficult time with abstractions, the teacher should use concrete objects whenever possible and semiconcrete materials when concrete objects are not available. Sufficient time for explanation and easy access to materials outside the science lesson is advised.

Maker also indicated that **orthopedically impaired** gifted students usually do not lag behind their nonhandicapped counterparts in cognitive maturity. However, they do require some special considerations when in the classroom and, more importantly, support from educators to ensure that they receive educational experiences commensurate with their talents and abilities. An important resource is the National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped, Ohio State University, 154 West 12th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210. Instructional aids produced in SAVI/SELPH would assist in teaching these special people. Specifically for science, contact National Science Foundation, 1800 G Street NW, Washington, DC 20550.

Safety Concerns

A major concern of educators who have handicapped students in their science laboratory classes is the issue of safety, particularly safety in the laboratory. In the past, qualified physically disabled individuals were frequently discouraged or even prohibited from taking courses because of educators' apprehensions concerning the physical capabilities of handicapped persons (Blumenkopf, 1980).

The reluctance of educators to permit disabled individuals' participation in science laboratories was cited as the major stumbling block placed in the paths of those handicapped students who later became professional scientists (Blumenkopf, 1980). Educators' fears were often based on the mistaken notion that physically disabled students would pose a considerable hazard to themselves or to their co-workers in a laboratory. In fact, the majority of physically handicapped individuals pose no greater risk and no greater hazard in a laboratory setting than do their able-bodied counterparts (Blumenkopf, 1980). Any extra safety precautions which should be observed because of the presence of handicapped students in a laboratory represent a small addition to safe laboratory practices.

...it appears that the major stumbling block for including these students in a laboratory setting is the reluctance of the teachers or the administrators.

In the past, various arguments have been invoked to exclude qualified handicapped students from participating in the laboratory sciences. Contentions that the insurance rates of educational institutions might skyrocket, or that insurance companies might prohibit handicapped persons from working in laboratories, are unjustified (Brantman, 1979; T. Gorre, St. Paul Insurance Companies, personal communication, March 13, 1990; Sears, 1974). The argument that Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations may not allow handicapped students to participate in chemistry laboratories is likewise invalid (Iowa OSHA, personal communication, March 13, 1990). Therefore, it appears that the major stumbling block for including these students in a

laboratory setting is the reluctance of the teachers or the administrators. It is here that your job as an advocate is needed to ensure appropriate educational opportunities for your student.

Compensatory Teaching

After assessing the abilities of the handicapped gifted student, it often becomes evident that there are certain activities which are not possible when one considers the individual and all of the circumstances which are present. This brings out the need for compensatory strategies which allow one to circumvent the disability in order to permit the student to experience the learning task in an appropriate fashion. A few common compensatory strategies will be discussed.

Whenever possible, structure learning experiences on cooperation rather than competition. Handicapped gifted students are often unwilling to try because they fear group rejection. Nonhandicapped peers can be a great assistance, both in the academic areas and also in the social and emotional realms of the handicapped gifted students. A form of peer assistance could be the cooperative learning setting. Cooperative learning would benefit these students far more than a competitive setting. Many times, the handicapped students are unable to compete in the traditional fashion with the nonhandicapped. The continual failure is devastating and contributes to the killer feeling, "I can't."

The cooperative setting also lends itself to more flexibility for the teacher in delivery of the materials and information which the students need. Creative outlets which the students can use without time restraints may be easier to manage in this type of situation.

Modifications of curriculum and strategies are other ways to meet the needs of these students. There is a necessity to assist students in collecting data and recording information. Such needs can be met with a "buddy system" under which a nonhandicapped student pairs up with the impaired student to help in this area. Computer software programs could also be used in recording data and writing up reports. Adaptions could include a voice-activated computer, a keyboard with braille, and interactive video with a touch-activated screen that continues the program without pushing keys. All of these adaptions would permit increased activity within the classroom – the desired result.

An addition to the curriculum might be bibliotherapy. It is an effective method for helping handicapped gifted students learn more about themselves. Thoughtfully selected books can increase awareness and sensitivity for all students while showing the handicapped gifted students that the problems they are experiencing may be difficult, but they may not be any more profound or damaging than conditions existing among other classmates. They can also associate with others who are having difficulty with academic, physical, or social-emotional adjustment.

There are personal characteristics the teacher can possess that would encourage involvement of the handicapped gifted students. The first is laughter. The teacher should develop in him or herself, and encourage in the student, the ability to laugh at one's mistakes. Torrance (1977) stated that, without humor, life would probably be unbearable to most people. The process of laughter is therapeutic both physically and psychologically.

A second trait that would benefit the students would be to be less than perfect yourself. Make a conscious decision to seek help in areas in which you do not have sufficient skill. Use the assistance of your students in meeting a desired goal (Hamachak, 1978).

A third characteristic would be to refrain from criticism. Try to serve as a supportive adult, who understands the special needs of these students. A consideration that is often overlooked is to prepare for spilled or scattered materials. The teacher should be tolerant and supportive when there are accidents.

Finally, be a teacher who encourages independence and self-regulation on the part of the impaired student. Find ways to allow these students to work independently or within a buddy system to ensure that equivalent work (but different types or forms) is required of each student. Making a video tape during independent or group work provides an excellent vehicle for engaging in conversation which will develop higher levels of self-regulation. Educators must continue to nurture students toward developing an internal locus of control. Provide opportunities for students and expect them to take responsibility.

All of the preceding suggestions are intended to give the teacher a broader sense of what can be done for the handicapped gifted students. Since each handicapped person has unique needs and complicating circumstances, there is a need for the teacher to adapt these suggestions appropriately for each situation.

A further consideration that extends beyond the direct educational realm is the school support. It is crucial for the full development of potential of this special population. It is the conclusion of some researchers that, due to the lack of such support by the school system, many gifted students (including the handicapped) have been ignored or have fallen between the cracks (Newland, 1976; Schmitz & Galbraith, 1985; Tolan, 1987). Newland felt that the result of this lack of support is that the gifted students become disenchanted with the system and may drop out academically and/or physically, or show recurrent misbehavior. Paradoxically, some handicapped gifted students simply may become compliant with the system and suppress their giftedness.

One cannot just be concerned with the student's handicap or giftedness. It is important to view each as a whole person with emotional, social, and physical needs. An important support person is the counselor, who should play a meaningful role in supporting and nurturing the emotional needs of all students, and must be informed about the nature and needs of the handicapped gifted. It appears when counselors do talk to the adolescent gifted student, it is usually about class scheduling or college preparation information, not about emotional needs (Clark, 1983). Leroux (1986) stated that bright students sometimes stay away from counselors because they are

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not trained in how gifted students feel or about their unique needs. As a result, these special students can be without the support they need to combat the feelings of loneliness and to cope with low self-concepts.

The active collaboration of a team of educators, each lending his or her special expertise, is critical if we are to effectively serve the handicapped gifted student in the science classroom. When one looks at today's secondary schools with their departmentalization, administrative hierarchies, and large physical plants, it is easy to assume that someone else is responsible. Many of the special adaptations are subject-specific, requiring cooperation of the classroom teacher and other specialists. Teachers serving gifted students must assume an active role in bringing all of the parties together for the handicapped gifted student.

A failure to respond is a severe loss to both society and the individual. Many handicapped gifted individuals find themselves trapped in occupations which are totally inappropriate for their talents and abilities. We have a human and constitutional responsibility to all of our citizens. Teachers of the gifted can be the "facilitating link" in representing equal opportunity for this distinct and low-incidence population of students.

The teacher of the gifted, in cooperation with the regular classroom teacher, counselor, and administrators can do much to help the handicapped gifted student succeed, not only in science, but as a person.

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A Spring Day

A little girl runs out to play,
She is young, innocent, and sweet.
Shge rolls around in the lush green grass,
and runs with small bare feet.

Suddenly, she stumbles,
and looks at what made her stop.
A tiny seed in a patch of grass,
which to her looks like a teardrop.

She picks it up with her tiny fingers,
and holds it very tight.
She runs and runs to a place she knows,
where the soft ground's covered with light.
She plants the seed.

One afternoon in the month of May,
an old little lady walks outside.
She hobbles over to a special spot
and looks up at a tree with pride.

The mighty oak which shades her
brings back an old memory
of one finr speing, many years ago,
when she planted a little seed.

Caitlin Sislin, Age 9
Eagle Rock HG Magnet School

END

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